



ART OF
PRESERVING
HEALTH

ESSAY
ON
SEPULCHRES









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Plates after Stothard

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2 Vols in 1

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THE
ART
OF
PRESERVING HEALTH.

BY JOHN ARMSTRONG, M.D.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED

A CRITICAL ESSAY ON THE POEM,

BY J. AIKIN, M.D.

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ON
DR. ARMSTRONG's POEM

ON THE
ART OF PRESERVING HEALTH.

THE Poems termed *Didactic* may be considered as of two kinds. Those to which the term is more properly applied, are such as directly profess to teach some art or science. The other species consists of those which, taking up some speculative topic, establish a theory concerning it by argument and illustration. Of the former kind, many will familiarly occur to the reader's memory; and the piece before us is an example of it. Of the latter, are various philosophical and argumentative pieces, from the poem of **Lucretius** on the Epicurean system, to **POPE**'s *Essay on Man*, and **AKENSIDE**'s *Pleasures of the Imagination*. A middle place between

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the two seems to be occupied by moral poetry, which, at the same time that it lays down practical rules for the conduct of life, discusses the theoretical principles on which they are founded.

Now, in estimating the respective value of these different products of the poetic art, it will be necessary to begin with considering what poetry essentially is, and what are its powers and purposes. It is, I conceive, essential to poetry that it should present ideas to the imagination, either agreeable of themselves, or rendered so by the cloathing and accompaniments given to them. Its leading aim is to please; and its powers are, to a certain degree, to make pleasing what would not be so of itself. If, therefore, by the poet's art, to the main end of giving pleasure, can be associated that of communicating instruction in such a way as will more strongly and agreeably impress it on the mind, its complete purpose may be said to be attained. Delight and profit combined are all that can be wished from the noblest of the fine arts.

But there are subjects, the nature of which renders such a combination scarcely possible, and in which every attempt to produce it, can only yield an incongruous mixture of ill-placed ornament and defective instruction. These are especially to be found in those arts of life which depend upon the application of mechanical rules, or the practical skill acquired by experience. To describe the minute processes of manual art in verse, in such a manner as that they shall be understood, is not only a very difficult task, but a wholly fruitless one; since, after all, the description cannot be so clear and precise as one written in prose, nor can the verse rise to poetry. We may, indeed, admire the skill shewn in the attempt to decorate a barren subject, but we must regret that the writer's talents were so ill employed. So obvious is this conclusion, that we may be assured no one ever wrote a didactic poem for the simple purpose of teaching an art. The choice has therefore been dictated by a search after novelty, or the desire of exhibiting a proof of poetical skill. These motives are expressly avowed by VIRGIL

in his *Georgics*, and are much more probable than the deep political design attributed to that poem, of exciting the Roman nobility to the pursuits of agriculture.

But while perhaps *every* poem strictly didactic labours under the inconvenience of a subject not calculated for displaying the art of poetry in its fairest form, some, both from their nature, and from the manner of treating them, are less defective in this respect than others. Thus, certain arts are closely connected in their theory with large and philosophical views of the system of the universe, or of the principles of the human mind. Some, even in their practice, afford matter for pleasing description, and admit of easy illustration from the most striking and agreeable objects of external nature. For example, the arts of husbandry are evidently allied to a vast variety of great and interesting topics; and we all know how advantageously VIRGIL has employed them as the ground-work of one of the most pleasing poems of antiquity. This piece, however, will also serve to shew the

unfavourable effect of attempting to express matter purely technical in a poetical manner. For no unprejudiced reader will deny, that in many of the preceptive passages, notwithstanding the variety of resources he employs to elevate them into poetry, he is overpowered by his subject, and chained, as it were, to the earth he is labouring;—while on the other hand, as a teacher of the art, he is frequently so obscure, as to have embarrassed the whole race of agricultural and literary critics since his time. It may also be observed, that had he extended his views further into the philosophical part of his subject, and made a full use of the moral and physical variety it was capable of affording, he would not have found it necessary to wander into digressions so remotely connected with his proposed topics, as scarcely to be justified by any reasonable claim of poetic licence. For even the semblance of teaching is destroyed by deviations, the manifest purpose of which is to disengage the reader's attention from the main subject, and fix it upon somewhat more captivating to the imagination.

With respect to the Piece before us, its subject seems on the whole as happily calculated for didactic poetry, as most of those which have been taken for the purpose. To say that it is a peculiarly proper one for a physician to write upon, is saying nothing of consequence to the reader. But the preservation of health is, in the first place, a matter of general importance, and therefore interesting to readers of every class. Then, although its rules, scientifically considered, belong to a particular profession, and require previous studies for their full comprehension, yet in the popular use, they are level to the understanding and experience of every man of reading and reflection. Had the subject been more strictly medical, such as the nature and cure of a particular disease, it would have been liable to the objections attending a confined and professional topic; and like the *Siphylis* of FRACASTORIUS, could scarcely, by the greatest poetical skill, have been rendered generally pleasing or instructive. But every man being in some measure entrusted with the care of his own health, and

being accustomed to speculations concerning Air, Diet, Exercise, and the Passions, the subject may be considered as universal. It is true, these topics can be poetically treated only in a popular manner, and the writer who chuses the vehicle of verse in treating of them, must take up with common and perhaps superficial notions. But by associating these notions with images addressed to the imagination, he may convey them in a more agreeable form; and he may advantageously employ the diction of poetry to give to practical rules an energy and conciseness of expression which may forcibly imprint them on the memory. This power is, indeed, the principal circumstance which imparts real utility to didactic poetry; and we all feel its effects on becoming acquainted with the moral and critical works of such authors as **HORACE**, **BOILEAU**, and **POPE**. Further, the topics with which the Art of Health is conversant, are connected with various of the loftiest and most extensive speculations on general nature; and in pursuing the regular vein of thought, many sources of truly poetical

ideas may be opened. It remains now to examine how far the author has availed himself of the advantages of his subject, and in what manner he has supported the character of a didactic poet.

As Invocation is an established part of a regular poem, it was necessary that the piece before us should be provided with that decoration. The choice of HYGEIA, or the Goddess of Health, for the object of address, was dictated by a very obvious propriety. The manner is imitated from that of LUCRETIUS in his fine invocation of Venus; and much imagination is displayed in the description of her approach, and of the various baleful forms of disease and death that fly from her presence.

Of the sources from which health is drawn, salubrious air is one of the most remarkable. Air, therefore, with propriety, is made the peculiar topic of the first book. Perhaps a descriptive passage of more strength can scarcely be met with than that which enumerates the

various contaminations of this element in a crowded city. The ideas, indeed, in their own nature disgusting, might be thought almost too vividly represented, did they not by contrast add to the sweetness of the subsequent rural picture, the effect of which is almost equal to that of the fabled calenture in calling forth irresistible longings after the country. Every reader familiar with the vicinity of the metropolis will feel peculiar pleasure from the glimpses given of those favourite summer retreats, Windsor, Richmond, Dulwich, and Hampstead, which will excite in his mind particular images, always much more engaging to the fancy than general ones. The poet next exercises his invention in one of the higher efforts of the art, that of allegorical personification. His figure and genealogy of *Quartana*, are well imagined; but like most of those who create these fancy-formed beings, he fails in the *agency* he attributes to her; for in merely inspiring a fit of the ague, she acts not as a person, but as an incorporeal cause.

He goes on to describe the different sites unfriendly to health, particularly the too moist and the too dry, which he makes the foundation of what are called in the schools of physic the phlegmatic and melancholic temperaments. In his instructions how to guard against the evils of different situations, he somewhat anticipates his future topics of diet and exercise. The passage, however, is full of vigorous description; and the means of correcting the watery and the parched soil afford spirited sketches of landscape. But he is no where so minute, as in that perpetual topic of an Englishman, the bad weather under which our island is so frequently submerged. A kind of splenetic strength of painting distinguishes his gloomy draught of loaded skies and eastern blasts, and of that vexatious fickleness of weather, in which all the seasons seem to “mix in every monstrous day.”

We are, however, brought into good-humour again by the description of cheerful, dry, and sheltered spots in which atmospherical evils may be palliated; and the

concluding eulogy on the cheering and invigorating influence of solar heat, leaves the fancy agreeably impressed with a sensation similar to that imparted by a serene summer's day. On the whole, the descriptive beauties of this book are considerable; but as a leading head of his subject, it might, I conceive, have been lengthened with advantage, by some circumstances relative to the influence of air upon health, which he has not touched upon. The sudden operation upon the spirits by alterations in the weight of the atmosphere, as indicated by the barometer, and the medicinal effects of change of climate upon invalids, would have afforded matter both for curious discussion, and interesting, and even pathetic, narration.

Diet, the subject of the second book, is, as the writer observes on entering upon it, comparatively barren and unfavourable to poetry. It is evidently more immersed in technical investigations than the former; and its connexion with the grossest of the sensual pleasures, renders

it difficult to be treated on without derogating from the dignity of a philosophical poem. Dr. ARMSTRONG, however, has managed it with judgment. He begins with a scientific topic, necessary as a foundation for the preceptive part which is to follow—the circulation of the blood. This function, however, admits of easy illustration from the common principles of hydraulics, as displayed in the motion of water through pipes and channels. The constant waste of solid particles that such a perpetual current must produce, demonstrates the necessity for a new supply by means of somewhat taken in. Hence naturally follows the consideration of food, its concoction, and the choice of aliments, solid and fluid, suited to persons of different constitutions, and in different climates. This is the general plan of the book. The poet's skill consists in taking the subject out of the language and reasonings of science, familiarising it by apt illustration, and diversifying it by amusing digression. All this he has attempted, and with success.

We shall not closely follow his steps while he treats of the digestibility and salubriousness of different foods, and lays down rules for the regulation of appetite. The subject, as we before hinted, is not of the most pleasing kind, and it is apparently rather from necessity than choice that he enters into it. His expressions and images are strong, but strength so employed is unavoidably a-kin to coarseness. A more agreeable topic is the praise of temperance and simple diet, from which he easily slides into a beautiful moral passage, shewing how much better riches may be employed than in the luxuries of the table—by relieving indigence and unfriended merit. One line is almost unrivalled in pathetic energy.

Tho' hush'd in patient wretchedness at home.

The opposite evils arising from too full and too scanty a diet are next enumerated, and cautions are given respecting the progress from one to the other. The different regimen proper for the several seasons of the year is then touched upon; and this naturally leads the poet to

open a new source of variety in description, derived from a view of human life as subsisting in climates removed to the two extremes from our own. The picture of the frigid zone is but slightly sketched; that of the torrid regions is much more minute, and will strongly remind the reader of a similar one by the hand of THOMSON; but I dare not assert that it will lose nothing by the comparison. It is rendered less appropriate, by the enumeration of vegetable articles which in reality belong to very different climates; the cocoa and anana being many degrees separated from the countries rich in corn and wine. The cedar of Lebanon, likewise, as a native of the bleak tops of high mountains, ought not to be placed by the side of the palm and plantain.

The succeeding passage, however, which paints the wonders of the Naiad kingdom, though it also has its parallel in the *Seasons*, is not, I think, surpassed by that, or any other poem, in strength and grandeur of description. The awful sublimity of the scenes themselves,

and the artifice of the poet in introducing himself as a spectator, and marking the supposed impressions on his own mind, elevate this piece to the very summit of descriptive poetry.

The praise of water-drinking follows ; with the precepts of the father of physic for chusing rightly this pure and innocent beverage. Notwithstanding the apparent earnestness with which the poet dwells on this topic, there is some reason to suspect that he was not quite hearty in the cause. For he not only adopts the notion of those who have recommended an occasional debauch as a salutary spur to nature ; but, descanting on the necessity a man may find himself under to practise hard drinking in order to promote the pursuits of ambition or avarice, he advises him (between jest and earnest) to enure himself to the trial by slow degrees. Here the physician and sage seem lost in the jolly companion. He soon, however, resumes those characters ; and after remarking the tendency of a continued use of wine to bring on premature old age, he

digresses into a theoretical account of the process by which the animal machine is gradually impeded in its motions, and at length comes to a full stop. This conducts him to a striking termination of the book, in a lofty description of the ravages made by time upon the works of human art, and the world itself.

Exercise, the subject of the third book, is a theme more adapted to poetry, and less immersed in professional disquisitions, than that of the preceding. Its benefits in the preservation of health are universally known; and the poet's task is rather to frame upon it pictures agreeable to the imagination, than to treat of it in a closely preceptive or scientific manner. Dr. ARMSTRONG begins with a lively portrait of the rustic, rendered firm and robust by toil, like a sturdy oak of the forest; and he produces him as a specimen of the influence of exercise on the human frame. He then exhorts the votary of health to partake of the various kinds of rural pastime, the walk in all seasons, the chace, and the sport

of fishing. This last amusement introduces a very pleasing passage, in which the poet characterises various streams, particularly the Liddel, on whose pastoral banks he first drew breath. The tribute of affection he pays to his native place, and the retrospect of his own boyish years, are sweetly interesting, and vie with all that THOMSON and SMOLLET have written on a similar topic.

The species of exercise afforded by gardening, gives occasion to a moral picture, of a man retired from public life, to the cultivation of his estate, surrounded with a select society of old companions, of the same tastes and pursuits with himself. This is wrought so much in the manner of THOMSON, that, were it not for some difference of style, it might pass undistinguished as a passage of the Seasons. The “*noctes cœnæque deum*” of HORACE, have contributed to adorn the piece.

Resuming the medical consideration of exercise, he next advert's to its power in strengthening weak parts by habitual exertions; and he dwells on the propriety of a gradual progress from rest to labour, and on the mischiefs attending too violent and heedless toils. This leads him to a serious and pathetic apostrophe on the fatal effects proceeding from exposure to cold, or draughts of cold liquor, when heated, which he represents as the most frequent of all causes of mortal disease. The ancient use of warm baths and unctious after exercise is his next topic, in speaking of which, he finds it necessary to touch upon that important function of the body, insensible perspiration. The strict connexion of this with health and disease, according as it is regular or deranged, has been a favourite argument with certain medical schools, and is here briefly illustrated in poetical language. The use of cold bathing in steeling the frame against the inclemencies of a cold climate, and the advantages of frequent ablution in hot ones, and of cleanliness in all, are further subjects of digression.

He returns to the consideration of exercise, as it is limited by recurring changes of the day and year; warning against it while the body is loaded with food, and during the heats of a summer's noon, and the chills of evening. These preceptive remarks lead him to a vein more fertile of ideas addressed to the imagination; for, conceiving the day to be sunk into the silence and gloom of midnight, he views the toil-spent hind, wrapt in the arms of profound repose, the sweet soother of his labours. Hence he digresses to the subject of dreams, and paints in vivid colours the horrid scenes that disturb the mind during the delirium of unquiet slumber. The proper period in which sleep is to be indulged, with its due measure to different constitutions are next considered. The influence of habit in this respect, brings on an exhortation to proceed very gradually in altering every corporeal habit; and this is made an introduction to a description of the successive changes of the year, with the distempers they bring. All this, and the remainder

of the book, might perhaps with greater propriety have made a part of the first head ; since its connexion with exercise is less obvious than with air. To introduce in some part of his plan an account of epidemic diseases was, however, evidently proper, both as matter for important instruction respecting the preservation of health, and as affording scope for poetical variety. After some common observations on the diseases of Spring and Autumn, and the means of guarding against them, with a forcible injunction against delay as soon as symptoms of danger appear ; the poet proceeds to an imitation of **VIRGIL** and **LUCRETIUS** in the particular description of a pestilence ; and he very happily chuses for his subject the Sweating-Sickness which prevailed first in England when the **EARL OF RICHMOND**, afterwards **HENRY VII.** came hither on his expedition against the tyrant **RICHARD.** So many graphical descriptions in prose and verse have been made of visitations of this kind, that scarcely any source of novelty remained in the *general* circumstances accompanying them. Dr. **ARMSTRONG** has

therefore judiciously introduced as much as possible of the *particular* character of this singular distemper, which, as far as we learn, was entirely unknown before, and has never appeared since, that period. He has not even rejected certain popular errors prevalent respecting it, which, though they ought carefully to be avoided in a medical treatise, may perhaps be permitted to enhance the wonder of a poetical narration. Such is that, which asserts Englishmen to have been its only victims, both in their own country and abroad—a notion which certainly adds to the interest with which a native of this country reads the relation. The conclusion of this book is a close copy from VIRGIL in the design, suitably varied in the circumstances. The deaths beyond the Atlantic allude to the unfortunate expedition to Carthagena, a popular topic of complaint at that period.

The title with which the fourth and last book is inscribed, is *the Passions*; but its subject would be more accurately expressed by the influence of the mind over

the body—a large and elevated topic, detached from the technical matter of any particular profession, and in its full extent comprising every thing sublime and affecting in moral poetry. The theory of the union of a spiritual principle with the gross corporeal substance, is that which the writer adopts as the basis of his reasonings. It is this ruling power which

Wields at his will the dull material world,
And is the body's health or malady.

He evidently confounds, however, (as all writers on this system do) matter of great subtilty, with what is not matter—or spirit. These “viewless atoms,” he says, “are lost in thinking,” yet thought itself is not the enemy of life, but painful thinking, such as that proceeding from anxious studies, and fretful emotions. To prevent the baneful effects of these, he counsels us frequently to vary our objects, and to join the bodily exercise of reading aloud, to the mental labour of meditation. Solitary brooding over thoughts of a particular kind,

such, especially, as pride or fear presents to the imagination, is warned against, in a passage full of energy, as the usual parent of madness or melancholy. Sometimes what the poet terms a *chronic passion*, or one arising from a misfortune which has made a lasting impression, such as the loss of a beloved friend, produces a sympathetic languor in the body, which can only be removed by shifting the scene, and plunging in amusement or business. Some persons, however, take a less innocent method of dispelling grief,

and in the tempting bowl
Of poison'd nectar, sweet oblivion swill.

The immediately exhilarating effects, and the sad subsequent reverse, attending this baneful practice, are here painted in the most vivid colouring, and form a highly instructive and pathetic lesson. Particularly, the gradual degradation of character which it infallibly brings on, is finely touched.

A kind of moral lecture succeeds, introduced as the supposed precepts of a sage in human life, whose character is represented as a compound of manly sense and cheerfulness. How to acquire happiness by moderation in the pursuit of pleasure, and by the practice of virtue, is the topic of this passage, which, though certainly digressive, has, however, a natural affinity with the leading subject of the book. Virtue has seldom been characterized with more spirit and dignity; and trite as the sentiments are, the energy with which they are expressed commands attention.

The poet next reverts to his more direct purpose, that of considering the passions in their influence upon bodily health. In general, he lays it down as a rule, that all emotions which are pleasing to the mind, are also salutary to the body. But there are exceptions, some being in their nature prone to hurtful excess; as an instance of which he gives the passion of Love. Here, again, he tries his strength with THOMSON, and his description

cannot but remind the reader of that fine picture of a love-sick youth drawn by this writer in his Spring. THOMSON, however, dwells much more minutely on the mental effects of love. ARMSTRONG, with propriety, fixes the attention more on the changes it induces in the corporeal frame, and this, both as it is a passion, and as it leads to sensual indulgences. With great force, yet with sufficient delicacy, he paints the condition of one unnerved and exhausted by excess in amorous delights. This, indeed, is deviating from the express subject of the book; since love as a passion, and the appetite for sexual enjoyment, are distinct things, the latter being certainly able to subsist without the former, if not the former without the latter. But an insensible gradation led him easily from the one to the other.

The passion of Anger is his next theme, and the bold personification with which he has introduced it, is admirably suited to its violent and precipitate character. A fit of rage has frequently been known at once to

overpower the vital faculties, and strike with instant death. To guard against it was therefore a point of peculiar importance ; and the poet has presented many striking moral arguments against the indulgence of that habit which makes us prone to ungoverned follies of this passion. But where reason proves too weak for the controul of this and other unruly affections of the mind, to what other power shall we resort for aid ? We may, (he hints) oppose passion to passion, and extinguish one by its opposite. But without dwelling on this contrivance (which, indeed, is neither very philosophical nor manageable) he proceeds to recognize a power in Nature which may be rendered the universal tranquillizer of the breast ; and this power is Music. With a contrasted description of the music which exercises this sympathetic dominion over the emotions, and that which is only the execution of difficult trifles, followed by an allusion to the fabulous stories of some ancient masters, and the praise of the art itself, the poet, somewhat abruptly, closes the book and the work.

From this cursory view of the contents of Dr. ARMSTRONG's piece, it will probably appear, that together with a sufficient variety for the purpose of amusement, there is uniformity of design enough to constitute the proper character of a didactic poem. Almost every thing essential to the preservation of health is touched upon during its course; and the digressive parts are neither wholly impertinent to the main object, nor do they occupy a disproportionate space. Many topics of an elevated nature are occasionally introduced; and moral sentiment is agreeably interwoven with precept and description. The writer has, apparently, found some difficulty in adhering to the arrangement of his design; for neither are the proposed topics of the four books equally copious of matter, nor has he with precision confined himself to the subjects belonging to each. However, as the *real* intention of such a work is not to afford systematic instruction, but to impress the mind with detached particulars, and to amuse it with variety, objections in point of method are little to be regarded.

If this performance on the whole offers a fund of useful advice and rational entertainment to every cultivated reader, and at the same time is in a good degree what it professes to be, it has fulfilled its purpose.

It now remains to consider how far this work is characterized by any peculiarity of style and manner.

English blank verse in its structure approaches so nearly to prose, that they who have employed it on elevated subjects, have adopted a variety of methods to give it the stamp of poetry. Some have transplanted as much as possible of the idiom of the ancient languages into their own. They have used words in uncommon senses, derived rather from etymology than practice; and in the formation of sentences, they have studiously deviated from the natural order, and copied the involutions and inversions of the Latin and Greek. Others have enriched their style with novel terms and compound epithets, and have aimed at an uncommon mode of say-

ing the commonest things. Very different from these is the manner of ARMSTRONG. It is distinguished by its simplicity—by a free use of words which owe their strength to their plainness—by the rejection of ambitious ornaments, and a near approach to common phraseology. His sentences are generally short and easy, his sense clear and obvious. The full extent of his conceptions is taken at the first glance; and there are no lofty mysteries to be unravelled by repeated perusal. What keeps his language from being prosaic, is the vigour of his sentiments. He thinks boldly, feels strongly, and therefore expresses himself poetically. Where the subject sinks, his style sinks with it; but he has for the most part excluded topics incapable either of vivid description, or of the oratory of sentiment. He had from nature a musical ear, whence his lines are scarcely ever harsh, and are usually melodious, though apparently without much study to render them so. Perhaps he has not been careful enough to avoid the monotony of making several successive lines close with a rest or pause in the sense.

On the whole, it may not be too much to assert that no writer in blank verse can be found more free from stiffness and affectation, more energetic without harshness, and more dignified without formality.

B O O K I.

A I R.

THE
ART
OF
PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK I.

A I R.

DAUGHTER of Pæon, queen of every joy,
HYGEIA*; whose indulgent smile sustains
The various race luxuriant nature pours,
And on th' immortal essences bestows
Immortal youth; auspicious, O descend! 5
Thou cheerful guardian of the rolling year,

* Hygeia, the Goddess of Health, was, according to the genealogy of the heathen deities, the daughter of Æsculapius; who, as well as Apollo, was distinguished by the name of Pæon.

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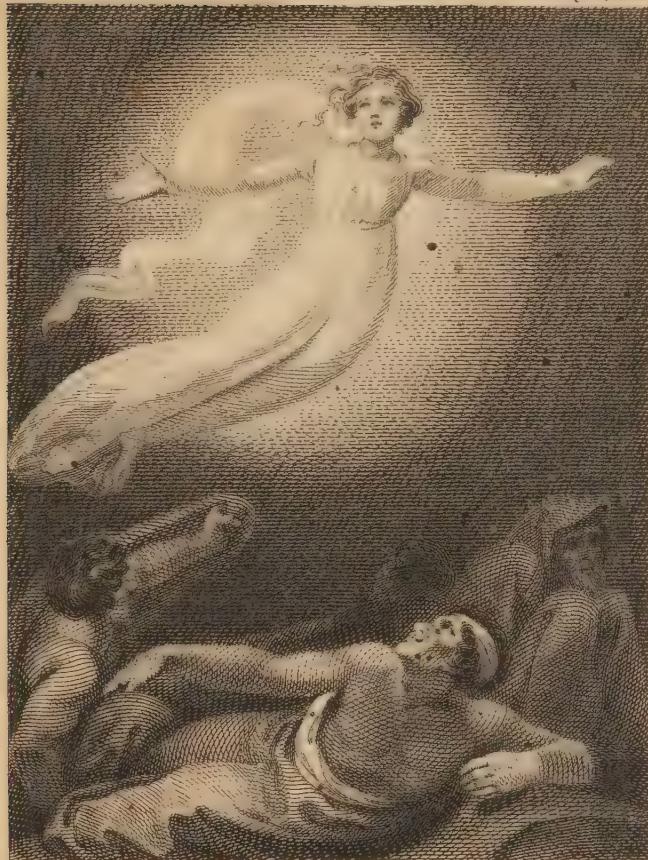
Whether thou wanton'st on the western gale,
Or shak'st the rigid pinions of the north,
Diffusest life and vigour thro' the tracts
Of air, thro' earth, and ocean's deep domain. 10

When thro' the blue serenity of heaven
Thy power approaches, all the wasteful host
Of Pain and Sickness, squalid and deform'd,
Confounded sink into the loathsome gloom,
Where in deep Erebus involv'd the Fiends 15

Grow more profane. Whatever shapes of death,
Shook from the hideous chambers of the globe,
Swarm thro' the shuddering air: whatever plagues
Or meagre famine breeds, or with slow wings
Rise from the putrid wat'ry element, 20

The damp waste forest, motionless and rank,
That smothers earth and all the breathless winds,
Or the vile carnage of th' inhuman field;
Whatever baneful breathes the rotten south;
Whatever ills th' extremes or sudden change 25

Of cold and hot, or moist and dry produce;

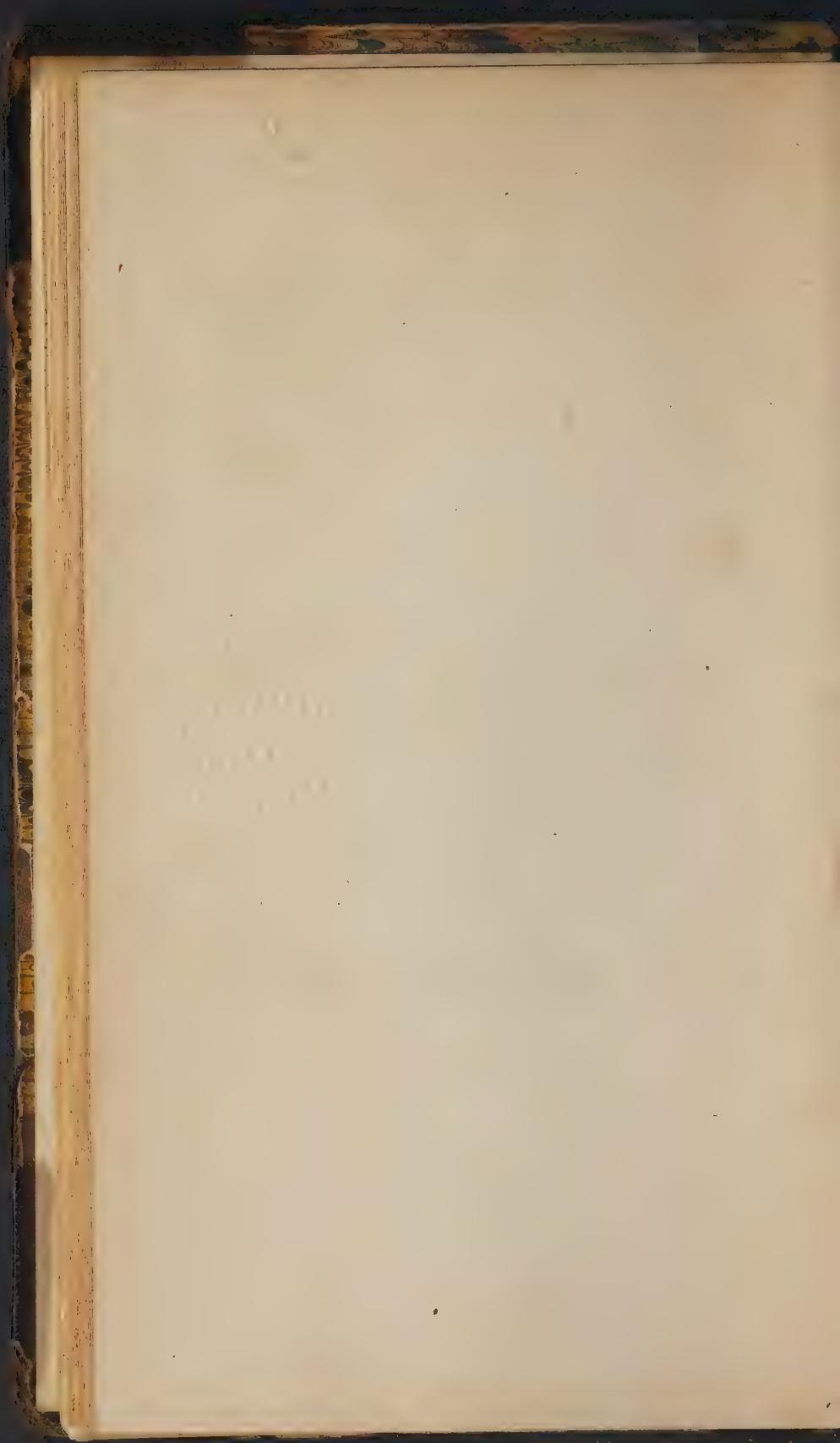


L. Stothard R.A. del'd

J. Neagle sculp't

When thro' the blue Serenity of Heaven
Thy Power approaches, all the wasteful Host
Of Pain and Sickness, squalid and deform'd
Confounded sink into the loathsome Gloom.

Published as the Act directs Nov: 1st 1792, by Cadell & Davies Strand.



They fly thy pure effulgence : they and all
The secret poisons of avenging heaven,
And all the pale tribes halting in the train
Of Vice and heedless Pleasure : or if aught
The comet's glare amid the burning sky,
Mournful eclipse, or planets ill-combin'd,
Portend disastrous to the vital world ;
Thy salutary power averts their rage,
Averts the general bane : and but for thee
Nature would sicken, nature soon would die.

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Without thy cheerful active energy
No rapture swells the breast, no Poet sings,
No more the maids of Helicon delight.
Come then with me, O Goddess heavenly gay !
Begin the song ; and let it sweetly flow,
And let it wisely teach thy wholesome laws :
“ How best the fickle fabric to support
“ Of mortal man ; in healthful body how
“ A healthful mind the longest to maintain.”

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'Tis hard, in such a strife of rules, to chuse
The best, and those of most extensive use;
Harder in clear and animated song
Dry philosophic precepts to convey.
Yet with thy aid the secret wilds I trace
Of nature, and with daring steps proceed
Thro' paths the muses never trod before.

Nor should I wander doubtful of my way
Had I the lights of that sagacious mind
Which taught to check the pestilential fire,
And quell the deadly Python of the Nile.
O thou belov'd by all the graceful arts,
Thou long the fav'rite of the healing powers,
Indulge, O MEAD! a well-design'd essay,
Howe'er imperfect: and permit that I
My little knowledge with my country share,
Till you the rich Asclepian stores unlock,
And with new graces dignify the theme.

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YE who amid this feverish world would wear
A body free of pain, of cares a mind ; 65
Fly the rank city, shun its turbid air ;
Breathe not the chaos of eternal smoke
And volatile corruption, from the dead,
The dying, sick'ning, and the living world
Exhal'd, to fully heaven's transparent dome 70
With dim mortality. It is not Air
That from a thousand lungs reeks back to thine,
Sated with exhalations rank and fell,
The spoil of dunghills, and the putrid thaw
Of nature ; when from shape and texture she 75
Relapses into fighting elements :
It is not Air, but floats a nauseous mass
Of all obscene, corrupt, offensive things.
Much moisture hurts ; but here a soiled bath,
With oily rancour fraught, relaxes more 80
The solid frame than simple moisture can.
Besides, immur'd in many a sullen bay
That never felt the freshness of the breeze,

This slumb'ring Deep remains, and ranker grows
With sickly rest : and (tho' the lungs abhor 85
To drink the dun fuliginous abyſs)
Did not the acid vigour of the mine,
Roll'd from so many thund'ring chimneys, tame
The putrid steams that overswarm the ſky ;
This cauſtic venom would perhaps corrode 90
Thoſe tender cells that draw the vital air,
In vain with all their unctuous rills bedew'd ;
Or by the drunken venous tubes, that yawn
In countleſs pores o'er all the pervious ſkin
Imbib'd, would poison the balsamic blood, 95
And rouse the heart to every fever's rage.
While yet you breathe, away ; the rural wilds
Invite ; the mountains call you, and the vales ;
The woods, the ſtreams, and each ambroſial breeze
That fans the ever-undulating ſky ; 100
A kindly ſky ! whose foſt ring power regales
Man, beast, and all the vegetable reign.
Find then ſome Woodland ſcene where nature ſmiles

Benign, where all her honest children thrive.

To us there wants not many a happy Seat!

105

Look round the smiling land, such numbers rise

We hardly fix, bewilder'd in our choice.

See where enthron'd in adamantine state,

Proud of her bards, imperial Windsor sits;

There chuse thy seat, in some aspiring grove

110

Fast by the slowly-winding Thames; or where

Broader she laves fair Richmond's green retreats,

(Richmond that sees an hundred villas rise

Rural or gay). O! from the summer's rage

O! wrap me in the friendly gloom that hides

115

Umbrageous Ham!—But if the busy Town

Attract thee still to toil for power or gold,

Sweetly thou may'st thy vacant hours possess

In Hampstead, courted by the western wind;

Or Greenwich, waving o'er the winding flood;

120

Or lose the world amid the sylvan wilds

Of Dulwich, yet by barbarous arts unspoil'd.

Green rise the Kentish hills in cheerful air;

But on the marshy plains that Lincoln spreads
Build not, nor rest too long thy wand'ring feet.

125

For on a rustic throne of dewy turf,
With baneful fogs her aching temples bound,
Quartana there presides : a meagre Fiend
Begot by Eurus, when his brutal force

Compress'd the slothful Naiad of the Fens.

130

From such a mixture sprung, this fitful pest
With fev'rish blasts subdues the sick'ning land :
Cold tremors come, with mighty love of rest,
Convulsive yawnings, lassitude, and pains
That sting the burden'd brows, fatigue the loins,
And rack the joints and every torpid limb ;

136

Then parching heat succeeds, till copious sweats
O'erflow : a short relief from former ills.

Beneath repeated shocks the wretches pine ;

The vigour sinks, the habit melts away ;

140

The cheerful, pure, and animated bloom
Dies from the face, with squalid atrophy
Devour'd, in fallow melancholy clad.

And oft the Sorceress, in her fated wrath,
Resigns them to the furies of her train ;
The bloated Hydrops, and the yellow Fiend
Ting'd with her own accumulated gall.

145

In quest of Sites, avoid the mournful plain
Where osiers thrive, and trees that love the lake ;
Where many lazy muddy rivers flow :
Nor for the wealth that all the Indies roll
Fix near the marshy margin of the main.
For from the humid soil and wat'ry reign
Eternal vapours rise ; the spungy air
For ever weeps : or, turgid with the weight

150

Of waters, pours a sounding deluge down.
Skies such as these let every mortal shun
Who dreads the dropfy, palsey, or the gout,
Tertian, corrosive scurvy, or moist catarrh ;
Or any other injury that grows
From raw-spun fibres idle and unstrung,
Skin ill-perspiring, and the purple flood
In languid eddies loitering into phlegm.

155

160

Yet not alone from humid skies we pine ;
For Air may be too dry. The subtle heaven, 165
That winnows into dust the blasted downs,
Bare and extended wide without a stream,
Too fast imbibes th' attenuated lymph
Which, by the surface, from the blood exhales.
The lungs grow rigid, and with toil essay 170
Their flexible vibrations ; or inflam'd,
Their tender ever-moving structure thaws.
Spoil'd of its limpid vehicle, the blood
A mass of lees remains, a drossy tide
That flow as Lethe wanders thro' the veins ; 175
Unactive in the services of life,
Unfit to lead its pitchy current thro'
The secret mazy channels of the brain.
'The melancholic fiend (that worst despair
Of physic), hence the rust-complexion'd man 180
Pursues, whose blood is dry, whose fibres gain
Too stretch'd a tone : and hence in climes adust
So sudden tumults seize the trembling nerves,
And burning fevers glow with double rage.

Fly, if you can, these violent extremes 185
Of Air; the wholesome is nor moist nor dry.
But as the power of chusing is deny'd
To half mankind, a further task ensues;
How best to mitigate these fell extremes,
How breathe unhurt the withering element, 190
Or hazy atmosphere: Tho' Custom moulds
To ev'ry clime the soft Promethean clay;
And he who first the fogs of Essex breath'd
(So kind is native air) may in the fens
Of Essex from inveterate ills revive 195
At pure Montpelier or Bermuda caught.
But if the raw and oozy heaven offend:
Correct the soil, and dry the sources up
Of wat'ry exhalation; wide and deep
Conduct your trenches thro' the quaking bog; 200
Solicitous, with all your winding arts,
Betray th' unwilling lake into the stream;
And weed the forest, and invoke the winds
To break the toils where strangled vapours lie;

Or thro' the thickets send the crackling flames. 205
Mean time at home with cheerful fires dispel
The humid air: And let your table smoke
With solid roast or bak'd; or what the herds
Of tamer breed supply; or what the wilds
Yield to the toilsome pleasures of the chase. 210
Generous your wine, the boast of rip'ning years;
But frugal be your cups: the languid frame,
Vapid and sunk from yesterday's debauch,
Shrinks from the cold embrace of wat'ry heavens.
But neither these nor all Apollo's arts, 215
Disarm the dangers of the dropping sky,
Unless with exercise and manly toil
You brace your nerves, and spur the lagging blood.
The fat'ning clime let all the sons of ease
Avoid; if indolence would wish to live. 220
Go, yawn and loiter out the long slow year
In fairer skies. If droughty regions parch
The skin and lungs, and bake the thickening blood;
Deep in the waving forest chuse your seat,

Where fuming trees refresh the thirsty air ;
And wake the fountains from their secret beds,
And into lakes dilate the rapid stream.

Here spread your gardens wide ; and let the cool,
The moist relaxing vegetable store

Prevail in each repast : Your food supplied

230

By bleeding life, be gently wasted down,

By soft decoction and a mellowing heat,

To liquid balm ; or, if the solid mass

You chuse, tormented in the boiling wave ;

That thro' the thirsty channels of the blood

235

A smooth diluted chyle may ever flow,

The fragrant dairy from its cool recess

Its nectar acid or benign will pour

To drown your thirst ; or let the mantling bowl

Of keen Sherbet the fickle taste relieve.

240

For with the viscous blood the simple stream

Will hardly mingle ; and fermented cups

Oft dissipate more moisture than they give.

Yet when pale seasons rise, or winter rolls

His horrors o'er the world, thou may'st indulge 245
In feasts more genial, and impatient broach
The mellow cask. Then too the scourging air
Provokes to keener toils than sultry droughts
Allow. But rarely we such skies blaspheme.
Steep'd in continual rains, or with raw fogs 250
Bedew'd, our seasons droop: incumbent still
A ponderous heaven o'erwhelms the sinking soul.
Lab'ring with storms in heapy mountains rise
Th' im battled clouds, as if the Stygian shades
Had left the dungeon of eternal night, 255
Till black with thunder all the South descends.
Scarce in a showerless day the heavens indulge
Our melting clime; except the baleful East
Withers the tender spring, and sourly checks
The fancy of the year. Our fathers talk 260
Of summers, balmy airs, and skies serene.
Good heaven! for what unexpiated crimes
This dismal change! The brooding elements
Do they, your powerful ministers of wrath,

Prepare some fierce exterminating plague ? 265

Or is it fix'd in the Decrees above

That lofty Albion melt into the main ?

Indulgent Nature ! O dissolve this gloom !

Bind in eternal adamant the winds

That drown or wither : Give the genial West 270

To breathe, and in its turn the sprightly North :

And may once more the circling seasons rule

The year; not mix in every monstrous day.

Mean time, the moist malignity to shun
Of burthen'd skies; mark where the dry champaign 275

Swells into cheerful hills; where Marjoram

And Thyme, the love of bees, perfume the air;

And where the * Cynorrhodon with the rose

For fragrance vies; for in the thirsty soil

Most fragrant breathe the aromatic tribes. 280

There bid thy roofs high on the basking steep

Ascend, there light thy hospitable fires.

* The wild rose, or that which grows on the common briar.

And let them see the winter morn arise,
The summer evening blushing in the west ;
While with umbrageous oaks the ridge behind 285
O'erhung, defends you from the blust'ring north,
And bleak affliction of the peevish east.
O ! when the growling winds contend, and all
The sounding forest fluctuates in the storm ;
To sink in warm repose, and hear the din 290
Howl o'er the steady battlements, delights
Above the luxury of vulgar sleep.
The murmuring rivulet, and the hoarser strain
Of waters rushing o'er the slippery rocks,
Will nightly lull you to ambrosial rest. 295
To please the fancy is no trifling good,
Where health is studied ; for whatever moves
The mind with calm delight, promotes the just
And natural movements of th' harmonious frame.
Besides, the sportive brook for ever shakes
The trembling air ; that floats from hill to hill
From vale to mountain, with incessant change 300

Of purest element, refreshing still
Your airy seat, and uninfect'd Gods.

Chiefly for this I praise the man who builds
High on the breezy ridge, whose lofty sides
Th' ethereal deep with endless billows chafes.
His purer mansion nor contagious years
Shall reach, nor deadly putrid airs annoy.

305

But may no fogs, from lake or fenny plain,
Involve my hill! And wheresoe'er you build ;
Whether on sun-burnt Epsom, or the plains
Wash'd by the silent Lee ; in Chelsea low,
Or high Blackheath with wint'ry winds assaile'd ;
Dry be your house : but airy more than warm.
Else every breath of ruder wind will strike
Your tender body thro' with rapid pains ;
Fierce coughs will teize you, hoarseness bind your voice,
Or moist Gravedo load your aching brows.
These to defy, and all the fates that dwell
In cloister'd air tainted with steaming life,

310

315

320

Let lofty ceilings grace your ample rooms ;
And still at azure noon tide may your dome
At every window drink the liquid sky.

Need we the funny situation here,

325

And theatres open to the south, commend ?

Here, where the morning's misty breath infests
More than the torrid noon ? How sickly grow,
How pale, the plants in those ill-fated vales
That, circled round with the gigantic heap
Of mountains, never felt, nor ever hope
To feel, the genial vigour of the sun !

330

While on the neighbouring hill the rose inflames
The verdant spring ; in virgin beauty blows
The tender lily, languishingly sweet ;
O'er every hedge the wanton woodbine roves,
And autumn ripens in the summer's ray.

335

Nor less the warmer living tribes demand
The foft'ring sun : whose energy divine
Dwells not in mortal fire ; whose gen'rous heat

340

Glows thro' the mass of groffer elements,
And kindles into life the ponderous spheres.
Cheer'd by thy kind invigorating warmth,
We court thy beams, great majesty of day !
If not the soul, the regent of this world,
First-born of heaven, and only less than God !

345

END OF THE FIRST BOOK.

B O O K II.

D I E T.

THE
ART
OF
PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK II.

D I E T.

ENOUGH of Air. A desart subject now,
Rougher and wilder, rises to my sight.
A barren waste, where not a garland grows
To bind the Muse's brow ; not ev'n a proud
Stupendous solitude frowns o'er the heath,
To rouse a noble horror in the soul :
But rugged paths fatigue, and error leads
Thro' endless labyrinths the devious feet.
Farewel, ethereal fields ! the humbler arts

Of life; the Table and the homely Gods
Demand my song. Elysian gales adieu!

10

The blood, the fountain whence the spirits flow,
The generous stream that waters every part,
And motion, vigour, and warm life conveys
To every particle that moves or lives; 15
This vital fluid, thro' unnumber'd tubes
Pour'd by the heart, and to the heart again
Refunded; scourg'd for ever round and round;
Enrag'd with heat and toil, at last forgets
Its balmy nature; virulent and thin 20
It grows; and now, but that a thousand gates
Are open to its flight, it would destroy
The parts it cherish'd and repair'd before.
Besides, the flexible and tender tubes
Melt in the mildest most nectareous tide 25
That ripening nature rolls; as in the stream.
Its crumbling banks; but what the vital force
Of plastic fluids hourly batters down,
That very force, those plastic particles

15

20

25

Rebuild : So mutable the state of man. 30

For this the watchful appetite was giv'n,
Daily with fresh materials to repair
This unavoidable expence of life,
This necessary waste of flesh and blood.

Hence the concoctive powers, with various art, 35
Subdue the cruder aliments to chyle ;
The chyle to blood ; the foamy purple tide
To liquors, which thro' finer arteries
To different parts their winding course pursue ;
To try new changes, and new forms put on, 40
Or for the public, or some private use.

Nothing so foreign but th' athletic hind
Can labour into blood. The hungry meal
Alone he fears, or aliments too thin ;
By violent powers too easily subdu'd, 45
Too soon expell'd. His daily labour thaws,
To friendly chyle, the most rebellious mass
That salt can harden, or the smoke of years ;

Nor does his gorge the luscious bacon rue,
Nor that which Cestria sends, tenacious paste
Of solid milk. But ye of softer clay,
Infirm and delicate! and ye who waste
With pale and bloated sloth the tedious day!
Avoid the stubborn aliment, avoid
The full repast; and let sagacious age
Grow wiser, lesson'd by the dropping teeth.

50

55

Half subtiliz'd to chyle, the liquid food
Readiest obeys th' assimilating powers;
And soon the tender vegetable mafs
Relents; and soon the young of thos that tread
The stedfast earth, or cleave the green abyfs,
Or pathless sky. And if the Steer must fall,
In youth and sanguine vigour let him die;
Nor stay till rigid age, or heavy ails,
Absolve him ill-requited from the yoke.

60

65

Some with high forage, and luxuriant ease,
Indulge the veteran Ox; but wiser thou,

From the bald mountain or the barren downs,

Expect the flocks by frugal nature fed ;

A race of purer blood, with exercise

70

Refin'd and scanty fare: For, old or young,

The stall'd are never healthy; nor the cramm'd.

Not all the culinary arts can tame,

To wholesome food, the abominable growth

Of rest and gluttony; the prudent taste

75

Rejects like bane such loathsome lusciousnes.

The languid stomach curses even the pure

Delicious fat, and all the race of oil :

For more the oily aliments relax

Its feeble tone; and with the eager lymph

80

(Fond to incorporate with all it meets)

Coily they mix, and shun with slippery wiles

The woo'd embrace. Th' irresoluble oil,

So gentle late and blandishing, in floods

Of rancid bile o'erflows: What tumults hence,

85

What horrors rise, were nauseous to relate.

Chuse leaner viands, ye whose jovial make

Too fast the gummy nutriment imbibes :
Chuse sober meals ; and rouse to active life
Your cumbrous clay ; nor on th' infeebling down, 90
Irresolute, protract the morning hours.
But let the man whose bones are thinly clad,
With cheerful ease and succulent repast
Improve his habit if he can ; for each
Extreme departs from perfect sanity. 95

I could relate what table this demands
Or that complexion ; what the various powers
Of various foods : But fifty years would roll,
And fifty more before the tale were done.
Besides there often lurks some nameless, strange, 100
Peculiar thing ; nor on the skin display'd,
Felt in the pulse, nor in the habit seen ;
Which finds a poison in the food that most
The temp'rature affects. There are, whose blood
Impetuous rages thro' the turgid veins, 105
Who better bear the fiery fruits of Ind

Than the moist Melon, or pale Cucumber.
Of chilly nature others fly the board
Supply'd with slaughter, and the vernal powers
For cooler, kinder, sustenance implore.
Some even the generous nutriment detest
Which, in the shell, the sleeping embryo rears.
Some, more unhappy still, repent the gifts
Of Pales; soft, delicious and benign:
The balmy quintessence of every flower,
And every grateful herb that decks the spring;
The fost'ring dew of tender sprouting life;
The best refection of declining age;
The kind restorative of those who lie
Half dead and panting, from the doubtful strife
Of nature struggling in the grasp of death.
Try all the bounties of this fertile globe,
There is not such a salutary food
As suits with every stomach. But (except,
Amid the mingled mass of fish and fowl,
And boil'd and bak'd, you hesitate by which

110

115

120

125

You funk oppress'd, or whether not by all;)
Taught by experience soon you may discern
What pleases, what offends. Avoid the cates
That lull the ficken'd appetite too long;
Or heave with fev'rish flushings all the face, 130
Burn in the palms, and parch the rough'ning tongue;
Or much diminish or too much increase
Th' expence, which nature's wife œconomy,
Without or waste or avarice, maintains.
Such cates abjur'd, let prouling hunger loose,
And bid the curious palate roam at will;
They scarce can err amid the various stores
That burst the teeming entrails of the world. 135

Led by fagacious taste, the ruthleſs king
Of beasts on blood and slaughter only lives; 140
The Tiger, form'd alike to cruel meals,
Would at the manger starve: Of milder feeds
The generous horse to herbage and to grain
Confines his wish; tho' fabling Greece resound

The Thracian steeds with human carnage wild. 145

Prompted by instinct's never-erring power,

Each creature knows its proper aliment ;

But man, th' inhabitant of ev'ry clime,

With all the commoners of nature feeds.

Directed, bounded, by this power within, 150

Their cravings are well-aim'd : Voluptuous Man

Is by superior faculties misled ;

Misled from pleasure even in quest of joy.

Sated with nature's boons, what thousands seek,

With dishes tortur'd from their native taste, 155

And mad variety, to spur beyond

Its wiser will the jaded appetite !

Is this for pleasure ? Learn a juster taste ;

And know that temperance is true luxury.

Or is it pride ? Pursue some nobler aim. 160

Dismiss your parasites, who praise for hire ;

And earn the fair esteem of honest men,

Whose praise is fame. Form'd of such clay as yours,

The sick, the needy, shiver at your gates.

Even modest want may bless your hand unseen, 165
Tho' hush'd in patient wretchednes at home.
Is there no virgin, grac'd with every charm
But that which binds the mercenary vow ?
No youth of genius, whose neglected bloom
Unfoster'd sickens in the barren shade ? 170
No worthy man, by fortune's random blows,
Or by a heart too generous and humane,
Constrain'd to leave his happy natal seat,
And sigh for wants more bitter than his own ?
There are, while human miseries abound, 175
A thoufand ways to waste superfluous wealth,
Without one fool or flatterer at your board,
Without one hour of sicknes or disgust.

But other ills th' ambiguous feast pursue,
Besides provoking the lascivious taste. 180
Such various foods, though harmles each alone,
Each other violate ; and oft we see
What strife is brew'd, and what pernicious bane,

From combinations of innoxious things.

Th' unbounded taste I mean not to confine 185

To hermit's diet needlesly severe.

But would you long the sweets of health enjoy,

Or husband pleasure; at one impious meal

Exhaust not half the bounties of the year,

Of every realm. It matters not mean while 190

How much to-morrow differ from to-day;

So far indulge: 'tis fit, besides, that man,

To change obnoxious, be to change inur'd.

But stay the curious appetite, and taste

With caution fruits you never tried before. 195

For want of use the kindest aliment

Sometimes offends; while custom tames the rage

Of poison to mild amity with life.

So heav'n has form'd us to the general taste

Of all its gifts; so custom has improv'd 200

This bent of nature; that few simple foods,

Of all that earth, or air, or ocean yield,

But by excess offend. Beyond the sense
Of light refection, at the genial board
Indulge not often; nor protract the feast
To dull satiety; till soft and slow
A drowsy death creeps on, th' expansive soul
Oppress'd, and smother'd the celestial fire.
The stomach, urg'd beyond it's active tone,
Hardly to nutrimental chyle subdues
The softest food: unfinish'd and deprav'd,
The chyle, in all its future wanderings, owns
Its turbid fountain; not by purer streams
So to be clear'd, but foulness will remain.
To sparkling wine what ferment can exalt
Th' unripen'd grape? Or what mechanic skill
From the crude ore can spin the ductile gold?

205

210

215

Gross riot treasures up a wealthy fund
Of plagues: but more immedicable ills
Attend the lean extreme. For physic knows
How to disburden the too tumid veins,

220

Even how to ripen the half-labour'd blood :

But to unlock the elemental tubes,

Collaps'd and shrunk with long inanity,

And with balsamic nutriment repair

225

The dried and worn-out habit, were to bid

Old age grow green, and wear a second spring ;

Or the tall ash, long ravish'd from the soil,

Thro' wither'd veins imbibe the vernal dew.

When hunger calls, obey ; nor often wait

230

Till hunger sharpen to corrosive pain :

For the keen appetite will feast beyond

What nature well can bear ; and one extreme

Ne'er without danger meets its own reverse.

Too greedily th' exhausted veins absorb

235

The recent chyle, and load enfeebled powers

Oft to th' extinction of the vital flame.

To the pale cities, by the firm-set siege

And famine humbled, may this verse be borne ;

And hear, ye hardiest sons that Albion breeds,

240

Long tos'd and famish'd on the wintry main ;

The war shook off, or hospitable shore
Attain'd, with temperance bear the shock of joy ;
Nor crown with festive rites th' auspicious day :
Such feast might prove more fatal than the waves, 245
Than war or famine. While the vital fire
Burns feebly, heap not the green fuel on ;
But prudently foment the wandering spark
With what the soonest feeds its kindred touch :
Be frugal ev'n of that : a little give 250
At first ; that kindled, add a little more ;
Till, by deliberate nourishing, the flame
Reviv'd, with all it's wonted vigour glows.

But tho' the two (the full and the jejune)
Extremes have each their vice ; it much avails 255
Ever with gentle tide to ebb and flow
From this to that : So nature learns to bear
Whatever chance or headlong appetite
May bring. Besides, a meagre day subdues
The cruder clods by sloth or luxury 260

Collected, and unloads the wheels of life.

Sometimes a coy aversion to the feast

Comes on, while yet no blacker omen lours;

Then is a time to shun the tempting board,

Were it your natal or your nuptial day.

Perhaps a fast so seasonable starves

The latent seeds of woe, which rooted once

Might cost you labour. But the day return'd

Of festal luxury, the wife indulge

Most in the tender vegetable breed:

265

Then chiefly when the summer beams inflame

The brazen heavens; or angry Sirius sheds

A feverish taint thro' the still gulph of air.

The moist cool viands then, and flowing cup

From the fresh dairy-virgin's liberal hand,

275

Will save your head from harm, tho' round the world

The dreaded *Causos roll his wasteful fires.

Pale humid winter loves the generous board,

The meal more copious, and a warmer fare;

And longs with old wood and old wine to cheer

280

* The burning fever.

His quaking heart. The seasons which divide
Th' empires of heat and cold ; by neither claim'd,
Influenc'd by both ; a middle regimen
Impose. Thro' autumn's languishing domain
Descending, nature by degrees invites 285
To glowing luxury. But from the depth
Of winter when th' invigorated year
Emerges ; when Favonius flush'd with love,
Toyful and young, in every breeze descends
More warm and wanton on his kindling bride ; 290
Then, shepherds, then begin to spare your flocks ;
And learn, with wise humanity, to check
The lust of blood. Now pregnant earth commits
A various offspring to th' indulgent sky :
Now bounteous nature feeds with lavish hand 295
The prone creation ; yields what once suffic'd
Their dainty sovereign, when the world was young ;
Ere yet the barbarous thirst of blood had seiz'd
The human breast.—Each rolling month matures
The food that suits it most ; so does each clime. 300

Far in the horrid realms of Winter, where
Th' establish'd ocean heaps a monstrous waste
Of shining rocks and mountains to the pole :
There lives a hardy race, whose plainest wants
Relentless earth, their cruel step-mother,
Regards not. On the waste of iron fields,
Untam'd, intractable, no harvests wave :
Pomona hates them, and the clownish God
Who tends the garden. In this frozen world
Such cooling gifts were vain : a fitter meal
Is earn'd with ease ; for here the fruitful spawn
Of Ocean swarms, and heaps their genial board
With generous fare and luxury profuse.

These are their bread, the only bread they know ;
These, and their willing slave the deer that crops
The shrubby herbage on their meagre hills.

Girt by the burning Zone, not thus the South
Her swarthy sons in either Ind, maintains :
Or thirsty Libya ; from whose fervid loins
The lion bursts, and every fiend that roams

305

310

315

320

Th' affrighted wilderness. The mountain herd,

Adust and dry, no sweet repast affords;

Nor does the tepid main such kinds produce,

So perfect, so delicious, as the shoals

Of icy Zembla. Rashly where the blood

325

Brews feverish frays; where scarce the tubes sustain

Its tumid fervour and tempestuous course;

Kind nature tempts not to such gifts as these.

But here in livid ripeness melts the Grape:

Here, finish'd by invigorating suns,

330

Thro' the green shade the golden Orange glows:

Spontaneous here the turgid Melon yields

A generous pulp: the Coco swells on high

With milky riches; and in horrid mail

The crisp Ananas wraps its poignant sweets.

335

Earth's vaunted progeny: In ruder air

Too coy to flourish, even too proud to live;

Or hardly rais'd by artificial fire

To vapid life. Here with a mother's smile

Glad Amalthea pours her copious horn.

340

Here buxom Ceres reigns : Th' autumnal sea
In boundless billows fluctuates o'er their plains.

What suits the climate best, what suits the men,
Nature profuses most, and most the taste
Demands. The fountain, edg'd with racy wine 345
Or acid fruit, bedews their thirsty souls.

The breeze eternal breathing round their limbs
Supports in else intolerable air :
While the cool Palm, the Plantain, and the grove
That waves on gloomy Lebanon, assuage 350
The torrid hell that beams upon their heads.

Now come, ye Naiads, to the fountains lead ;
Now let me wander thro' your gelid reign.
I burn to view th' enthusiastic wilds
By mortal else untrod. I hear the din 355
Of waters thund'ring o'er the ruin'd cliffs.
With holy reverence I approach the rocks
Whence glide the streams renown'd in ancient song.
Here from the desart down the rumbling steep

First springs the Nile ; here bursts the sounding Po
In angry waves ; Euphrates hence devolves
A mighty flood to water half the East ;
And there, in Gothic solitude reclin'd,
The cheerless Tanais pours his hoary urn.

What solemn twilight ! What stupendous shades 361

Enwrap these infant floods ! Thro' every nerve

A sacred horror thrills, a pleasing fear

Glides o'er my frame. The forest deepens round ;

And more gigantic still th' impending trees

Stretch their extravagant arms athwart the gloom.

Are these the confines of some fairy world ? 371

A land of Genii ? Say, beyond these wilds

What unknown nations ? If indeed beyond

Aught habitable lies. And whither leads,

To what strange regions, or of bliss or pain, 375

That subterraneous way ! Propitious maids,

Conduct me, while with fearful steps I tread

This trembling ground. The task remains to sing

Your gifts (so Pæon, so the powers of health



T. Stothard R.A. pinx:

J. Heath sculp:

*O comfortable Streams! With eager Lips
And trembling Hand the languid thirsty quaff
New Life in you;*

Command) to praise your crystal element : 380

The chief ingredient in heaven's various works;

Whose flexile genius sparkles in the gem,

Grows firm in oak, and fugitive in wine ;

The vehicle, the source, of nutriment

And life, to all that vegetate or live. 385

O comfortable streams ! With eager lips

And trembling hand the languid thirsty quaff

New life in you ; fresh vigour fills their veins.

No warmer cups the rural ages knew ;

None warmer fought the fires of human kind. 390

Happy in temperate peace ! Their equal days

Felt not th' alternate fits of feverish mirth,

And sick dejection. Still serene and pleas'd

They knew no pains but what the tender soul

With pleasure yields to, and would ne'er forget. 395

Blest with divine immunity from ails,

Long centuries they liv'd ; their only fate

Was ripe old age, and rather sleep than death.

Oh! could those worthies from the world of Gods
Return to visit their degenerate sons, 400
How would they scorn the joys of modern time,
With all our art and toil improved to pain!
Too happy they! But wealth brought luxury,
And luxury on sloth begot disease.

Learn temperance, friends; and hear without disdain
The choice of water. Thus the *Coan sage 406
Opin'd, and thus the learn'd of every School.
What least of foreign principles partakes
Is best: The lightest then; what bears the touch
Of fire the least, and soonest mounts in air; 410
The most insipid; the most void of smell.
Such the rude mountain from his horrid sides
Pours down; such waters in the sandy vale
For ever boil, alike of winter frosts
And summer's heat secure. The crystal stream, 415
Through rocks resounding, or for many a mile
O'er the chaf'd pebbles hurl'd, yields wholesome, pure

* Hippocrates.

And mellow draughts; except when winter thaws,
And half the mountains melt into the tide.

Tho' thirst were e'er so resolute, avoid 420
The fordid lake, and all such drowsy floods
As fill from Lethe Belgia's slow canals;
(With rest corrupt, with vegetation green;
Squalid with generation, and the birth
Of little monsters;) till the power of fire 425
Has from profane embraces disengag'd
The violated lymph. 'The virgin stream
In boiling wastes its finer soul in air.

Nothing like simple element dilutes
The food, or gives the chyle so soon to flow. 430
But where the stomach indolent and cold
Toys with its duty, animate with wine
Th' insipid stream: Tho' golden Ceres yields
A more voluptuous, a more sprightly draught;
Perhaps more active. Wine unmix'd, and all 435
The gluey floods that from the vex'd abyfs

Of fermentation spring; with spirit fraught,
And furious with intoxicating fire;
Retard concoction, and preserve unthaw'd
Th' embodied mass. You see what countless years, 440
Embalm'd in fiery quintessence of wine,
The puny wonders of the reptile world,
The tender rudiments of life, the slim
Unravellings of minute anatomy,
Maintain their texture, and unchang'd remain. 445

We curse not wine: The vile excess we blame;
More fruitful than th' accumulated board,
Of pain and misery. For the subtle draught
Faster and surer swells the vital tide;
And with more active poison, than the floods 450
Of grosser crudity convey, pervades
The far remote meanders of our frame.
Ah! fly deceiver! Branded o'er and o'er,
Yet still believ'd! Exulting o'er the wreck
Of sober vows!—But the Parnassian Maids 455

* Another time perhaps shall sing the joys,
The fatal charms, the many woes of wine ;
Perhaps its various tribes, and various powers.

Mean time, I would not always dread the bowl,
Nor every trespass shun. The feverish strife, 460
Rous'd by the rare debauch, subdues, expels
The loitering crudities that burden life ;
And, like a torrent full and rapid, clears
Th' obstructed tubes. Besides, this restless world
Is full of chances, which by habit's power 465
To learn to bear is easier than to shun.
Ah ! when ambition, meagre love of gold,
Or sacred country calls, with mellowing wine
To moisten well the thirsty suffrages ;
Say how, unseason'd to the midnight frays 470
Of Comus and his rout, wilt thou contend
With Centaurs long to hardy deeds inur'd ?
Then learn to revel ; but by slow degrees :
By slow degrees the liberal arts are won ;

* See Book IV.

And Hercules grew strong. But when you smooth 475
The brows of care, indulge your festive vein
In cups by well-inform'd experience found
The least your bane : and only with your friends.
There are sweet follies ; frailties to be seen
By friends alone, and men of generous minds. 480

Oh ! seldom may the fated hours return
Of drinking deep ! I would not daily taste,
Except when life declines, even sober cups.
Weak withering age no rigid law forbids,
With frugal nectar, smooth and slow with balm, 485
The sable habit daily to bedew,
And give the hesitating wheels of life
Gliblier to play. But youth has better joys :
And is it wise when youth with pleasure flows,
To squander the reliefs of age and pain ! 490

What dextrous thousands just within the goal
Of wild debauch direct their nightly course !

Perhaps no fickly qualms bedim their days,
No morning admonitions shock the head.

But ah ! what woes remain ! Life rolls apace, 495

And that incurable disease old age,

In youthful bodies more severely felt,
More sternly active, shakes their blasted prime :

Except kind nature by some hasty blow

Prevent the lingering fates. For know, whate'er 500

Beyond its natural fervour hurries on

The sanguine tide ; whether the frequent bowl,

High-season'd fare, or exercise to toil

Protracted ; spurs to its last stage tir'd life,

And sows the temples with untimely snow. 505

When life is new, the ductile fibres feel

The heart's increasing force ; and, day by day,

The growth advances : till the larger tubes,

Acquiring (from their* elemental veins,

* In the human body, as well as in those of other animals, the larger blood vessels are composed of smaller ones ; which, by the violent motion and pressure of the fluids in the large vessels, lose their cavities by degrees, and degenerate into impervious chords or

Condens'd to solid chords) a firmer tone, 510

Sustain, and just sustain, th' impetuous blood.

Here stops the growth. With overbearing pulse

And pressure, still the great destroy the small;

Still with the ruins of the small grow strong.

Life glows mean time, amid the grinding force 515

Of viscous fluids and elastic tubes;

Its various functions vigorously are plied

By strong machinery; and in solid health

The Man confirm'd long triumphs o'er disease.

But the full ocean ebbs: There is a point, 520

By nature fix'd, whence life must downward tend.

For still the beating tide consolidates

The stubborn vessels, more reluctant still

To the weak throbs of th' ill-supported heart.

fibres. In proportion as these small vessels become solid, the larger must of course grow less extensible, more rigid, and make a stronger resistance to the action of the heart, and force of the blood. From this gradual condensation of the smaller vessels, and consequent rigidity of the larger ones, the progress of the human body from infancy to old age is accounted for.

'This languishing, these strength'ning by degrees 525
To hard unyielding unelastic bone,
Thro' tedious channels the congealing flood
Crawls lazily, and hardly wanders on ;
It loiters still : And now it stirs no more.

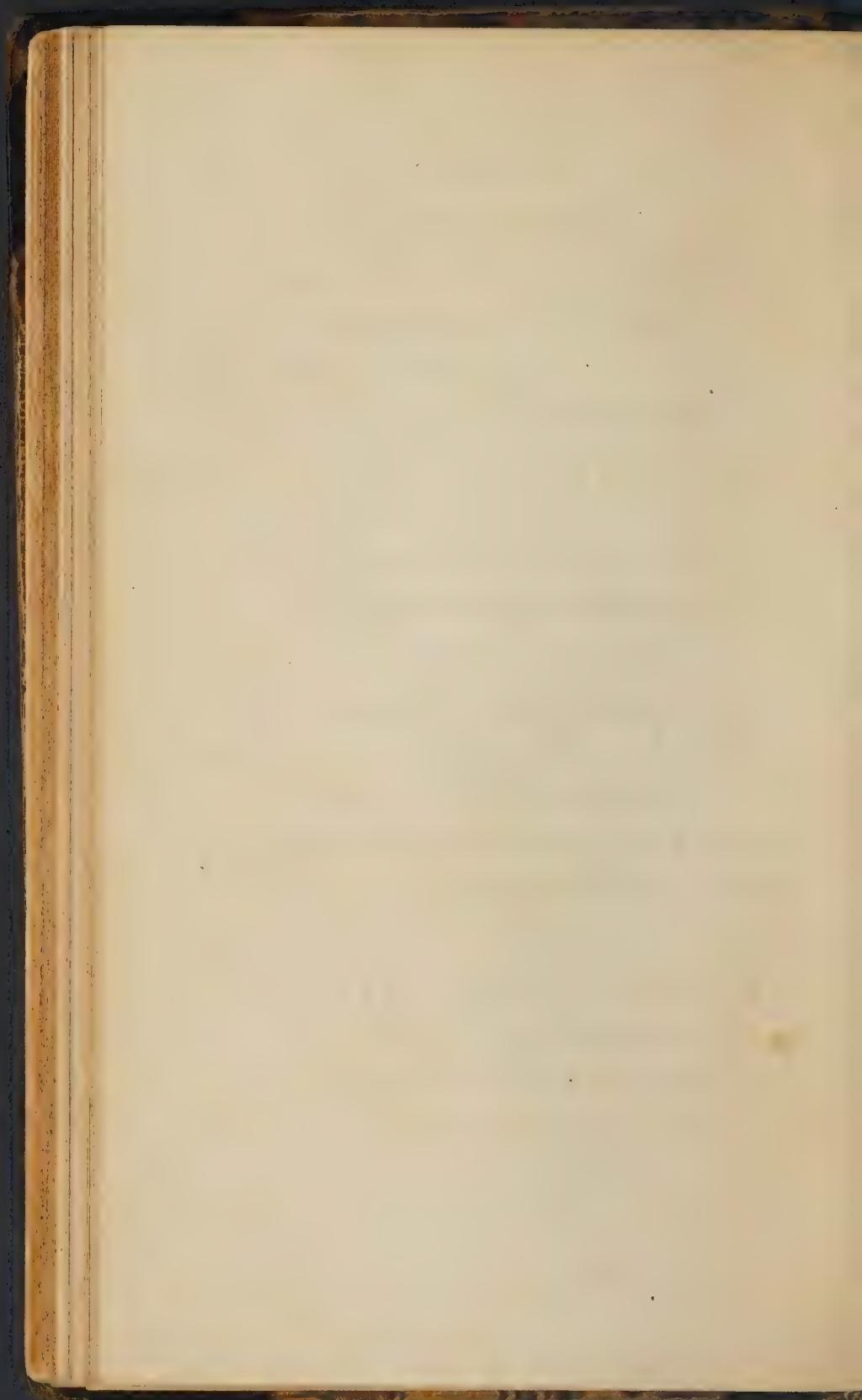
This is the period few attain ; the death 530
Of nature ; thus (so heav'n ordain'd it) life
Destroys itself ; and could these laws have chang'd,
Nestor might now the fates of Troy relate ;
And Homer live immortal as his song.

What does not fade ? The tower that long had stood
The crush of thunder and the warring winds, 536
Shook by the slow but sure destroyer, Time,
Now hangs in doubtful ruins o'er its base.
And flinty pyramids, and walls of brass,
Descend : the Babylonian spires are funk ; 540
Achaia, Rome, and Egypt moulder down.
Time shakes the stable tyranny of thrones,
And tottering empires crush by their own weight.

This huge rotundity we tread grows old ;
And all those worlds that roll around the sun, 545
The sun himself, shall die ; and ancient Night
Again involve the desolate abyfs :
Till the great FATHER thro' the lifeless gloom
Extend his arm to light another world,
And bid new planets roll by other laws. 550
For thro' the regions of unbounded space,
Where unconfin'd Omnipotence has room,
BEING, in various systems, fluctuates still
Between creation and abhor'd decay :
It ever did ; perhaps and ever will. 555
New worlds are still emerging from the deep ;
The old descending, in their turns to rise.

B O O K III.

E X E R C I S E.



THE
ART
OF
PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK III.

EXERCISE.

THRO' various toils th' adventurous Muse has past;
But half the toil, and more than half, remains.
Rude is her Theme, and hardly fit for Song;
Plain, and of little ornament; and I
But little practis'd in th' Aonian arts. 5
Yet not in vain such labours have we tried,
If aught these lays the fickle health confirm.
To you, ye delicate, I write; for you

I tame my youth to philosophic cares,
And grow still paler by the midnight lamps. 10
Not to debilitate with timorous rules
A hardy frame; nor needlesly to brave
Inglorious dangers, proud of mortal strength;
Is all the lesson that in wholesome years
Concerns the strong. His care were ill bestow'd 15
Who would with warm effeminacy nurse
The thriving oak which on the mountain's brow
Bears all the blasts that sweep the wint'ry heav'n.

Behold the labourer of the glebe, who toils
In dust, in rain, in cold and sultry skies; 20
Save but the grain from mildews and the flood,
Nought anxious he what sickly stars ascend.
He knows no laws by Esculapius given;
He studies none. Yet him nor midnight fogs
Infest, nor those envenom'd shafts that fly 25
When rabid Sirius fires th' autumnal noon.
His habit pure with plain and temperate meals,

Robust with labour, and by custom steel'd
To every casualty of varied life ;
Serene he bears the peevish Eastern blast.
And uninfected breathes the mortal South.

30

Such the reward of rude and sober life ;
Of labour such. By health the peasant's toil
Is well repaid ; if exercise were pain
Indeed, and temperance pain. By arts like these
Láconia nurs'd of old her hardy sons ;
And Rome's unconquer'd legions urg'd their way,
Unhurt, thro' every toil in every clime.

35

Toil, and be strong. By toil the flaccid nerves
Grow firm, and gain a more compacted tone ;
The greener juices are by toil subdu'd,
Mellow'd, and subtiliz'd ; the vapid old
Expell'd, and all the rancour of the blood.
Come, my companions, ye who feel the charms
Of nature and the year ; come, let us stray

40

45

Where chance or fancy leads our roving walk :
Come, while the soft voluptuous breezes fan
'The fleecy heavens, enwrap the limbs in balm,
And shed a charming languor o'er the soul.

Nor when bright Winter sows with prickly frost 50
The vigorous ether, in unmanly warmth
Indulge at home ; nor even when Eurus' blasts
This way and that convolve the lab'ring woods.

My liberal walks, save when the skies in rain
Or fogs relent, no season should confine 55
Or to the cloister'd gallery or arcade.

Go, climb the mountain; from th' ethereal source
Imbibe the recent gale. The cheerful morn
Beams o'er the hills; go, mount th' exulting steed.

Already, see, the deep-mouth'd beagles catch 60
The tainted mazes; and, on eager sport
Intent, with emulous impatience try
Each doubtful trace. Or, if a nobler prey
Delight you more, go chase the desperate deer;

And thro' its deepest solitudes awake 65
The vocal forest with the jovial horn.

But if the breathless chase o'er hill and dale
Exceed your strength; a sport of less fatigue,
Not less delightful, the prolific stream
Affords. The crystal rivulet, that o'er 70
A stony channel rolls its rapid maze,
Swarms with the silver fry. Such, thro' the bounds
Of pastoral Stafford, runs the brawling Trent;
Such Eden, sprung from Cumbrian mountains; such
The Esk, o'erhung with woods; and such the stream
On whose Arcadian banks I first drew air, 76
Liddal; till now, except in Doric lays
Tun'd to her murmurs by her love-sick swains,
Unknown in song: Tho' not a purer stream,
Thro' meads more flowery or more romantic groves, 80
Rolls toward the western main. Hail, sacred flood!
May still thy hospitable swains be blest
In rural innocence; thy mountains still
Teem with the fleecy race; thy tuneful woods
For ever flourish; and thy vales look gay 85
With painted meadows, and the golden grain!

Oft, with thy blooming sons, when life was new,
Sportive and petulant, and charm'd with toys,
In thy transparent eddies have I lav'd :
Oft trac'd with patient steps thy fairy banks, 90
With the well-imitated fly to hook
The eager trout, and with the slender line
And yielding rod solicite to the shore
The struggling panting prey ; while vernal clouds
And tepid gales obscur'd the ruffled pool, 95
And from the deeps call'd forth the wanton swarms.

Form'd on the Samian school, or those of Ind,
There are who think these pastimes scarce humane.
Yet in my mind (and not relentless I)
His life is pure that wears no fouler stains. 100
But if thro' genuine tenderness of heart,
Or secret want of relish for the game,
You shun the glories of the chase, nor care
To haunt the peopled stream ; the Garden yields
A soft amusement, an humane delight. 105

To raise th' insipid nature of the ground ;
Or tame its savage genius to the grace
Of careless sweet rusticity, that seems
The amiable result of happy chance,
Is to create ; and gives a god-like joy, 111
Which every year improves. Nor thou disdain
To check the lawless riot of the trees,
To plant the grove, or turn the barren mould.
O happy he ! whom, when his years decline,
(His fortune and his fame by worthy means 111
Attain'd, and equal to his moderate mind ;
His life approv'd by all the wise and good,
Even envied by the vain) the peaceful groves
Of Epicurus, from this stormy world,
Receive to rest ; of all ungrateful cares 12
Absolv'd, and sacred from the selfish crowd.
Happiest of men ! if the same soil invites
A chosen few, companions of his youth,
Once fellow-rakes perhaps, now rural friends ;
With whom in easy commerce to pursue 12

Nature's free charms, and vie for sylvan fame :
A fair ambition; void of strife or guile,
Or jealousy, or pain to be outdone.

Who plans th' enchanted garden, who directs

The visto best, and best conducts the stream : 130

Whose groves the fastest thicken and ascend ;

Whom first the welcome Spring salutes ; who shews

The earliest bloom, the sweetest proudest charms

Of Flora, who gives Pomona's juice

To match the sprightly genius of champain. 135

Thrice happy days ! in rural busines past :

Blest winter nights ! when as the genial fire

Cheers the wide hall, his cordial family

With soft domestic arts the hours beguile,

And pleasing talk that starts no timorous fame, 140

With wittie wantonness to hunt it down :

Or thro' the fairy-land of tale or song

Delighted wander, in fictitious fates

Engag'd, and all that strikes humanity :

Till lost in fable, they the stealing hour 145

Of timely rest forget. Sometimes, at eve
His neighbours lift the latch, and bless unbid
His festal roof; while, o'er the light repast,
And sprightly cups, they mix in social joy;
And, thro' the maze of conversation, trace

150

Whate'er amuses or improves the mind.

Sometimes at eve (for I delight to taste
The native zest and flavour of the fruit,
Where sense grows wild and takes of no manure)

The decent, honest, cheerful husbandman

155

Should drown his labours in my friendly bowl;
And at my table find himself at home.

Whate'er you study, in whate'er you sweat,
Indulge your taste. Some love the manly foils;
The tennis some; and some the graceful dance.
Others more hardy, range the purple heath,
Or naked stubble; where from field to field
The sounding coveys urge their labouring flight;
Eager amid the rising cloud to pour

160

The gun's unerring thunder: And there are 165
Whom still the * meed of the green archer charms.
He chuses best, whose labour entertains
His vacant fancy most: The toil you hate
Fatigues you soon, and scarce improves your limbs.

As beauty still has blemish; and the mind 170
The most accomplish'd its imperfect fide;
Few bodies are there of that happy mould
But some one part is weaker than the rest:
The legs, perhaps, or arms refuse their load,
Or the chest labours. These assiduously, 175
But gently, in their proper arts employ'd,
Acquire a vigour and springy activity
To which they were not born. But weaker parts
Abhor fatigue and violent discipline.

Begin with gentle toils; and, as your nerves 180
Grow firm, to hardier by just steps aspire.

* This word is much used by some of the old English poets,
and signifies *Reward* or *Prize*.

The prudent, even in every moderate walk,
At first but saunter; and by slow degrees
Increase their pace. This doctrine of the wise
Well knows the master of the flying steed. 185

First from the goal the manag'd coursers play
On bended reins: as yet the skilful youth
Repress their foamy pride; but every breath
The race grows warmer, and the tempest swells;
Till all the fiery mettle has its way, 190
And the thick thunder hurries o'er the plain.

When all at once from indolence to toil
You spring, the fibres by the hasty shock
Are tir'd and crack'd, before their unctuous coats,
Compress'd, can pour the lubricating balm. 195

Besides, collected in the passive veins,
The purple mass a sudden torrent rolls,
O'erpowers the heart and deluges the lungs
With dangerous inundation: Oft the source
Of fatal woes; a cough that foams with blood, 200

Asthma and feller * Peripneumony,
Or the slow minings of the hectic fire.

Th' athletic Fool, to whom what heaven deny'd
Of soul is well compensated in limbs,
Oft from his rage, or brainless frolic, feels
His vegetation and brute force decay.

The men of better clay and finer mould
Know nature, feel the human dignity ;
And scorn to vie with oxen or with apes.

Pursu'd prolixly, even the gentlest toil
Is waste of health : repose by small fatigue
Is earn'd ; and (where your habit is not prone
To thaw) by the first moisture of the brows.

The fine and subtle spirits cost too much
To be profus'd, too much the roscid balm.
But when the hard varieties of life
You toil to learn ; or try the dusty chasé,
Or the warm deeds of some important day :

* The inflammation of the lungs.

205

210

215

Hot from the field, indulge not yet your limbs
In wish'd repose ; nor court the fanning gale, 220
Nor taste the spring. O ! by the sacred tears
Of widows, orphans, mothers, sisters, fires,
Forbear ! No other pestilence has driven
Such myriads o'er th' irremeable deep.

Why this so fatal, the sagacious Muse 225

'Thro' nature's cunning labyrinths could trace :
But there are secrets which who knows not now,
Must, ere he reach them, climb the heapy Alps
Of Science ; and devote seven years to toil.

Befides, I would not stun your patient ears 230
With what it little boots you to attain.

He knows enough, the mariner, who knows
Where lurk the shelves, and where the whirlpools boil,
What signs portend the storm : To subtler minds
He leaves to scan, from what mysterious cause 235
Charybdis rages in th' Ionian wave ;
Whence those impetuous currents in the main
Which neither oar nor sail can stem ; and why

The roughening deep expects the storm, as sure
As red Orion mounts the shrouded heaven.

240

In ancient times, when Rome with Athens vied
For polish'd luxury and useful arts ;
All hot and reeking from th' Olympic strife,
And warm Palestra, in the tepid bath
Th' athletic youth relax'd their weary limbs.

245

Soft oils bedew'd them, with the grateful pow'rs
Of Nard and Cassia fraught, to sooth and heal
The cherish'd nerves. Our less voluptuous clime
Not much invites us to such arts as these.

'Tis not for those, whom gelid skies embrace,
And chilling fogs ; whose perspiration feels
Such frequent bars from Eurus and the North ;
'Tis not for those to cultivate a skin
Too soft ; or teach the recremental fume
Too fast to crowd thro' such precarious ways.
For thro' the small arterial mouths, that pierce
In endless millions the close-woven skin,

250

255

The baser fluids in a constant stream
Escape, and viewless melt into the winds.
While this eternal, this most copious, waste 260
Of blood, degenerate into vapid brine,
Maintains its wonted measure, all the powers
Of health befriend you, all the wheels of life
With ease and pleasure move: But this restrain'd
Or more or less, so more or less you feel 265
The functions labour: From this fatal source
What woes descend is never to be sung.
To take their numbers were to count the sands
That ride in whirlwind the parch'd Libyan air;
Or waves that, when the blustering North embroils 270
The Baltic, thunder on the German shore.
Subject not then, by soft emollient arts,
This grand expence, on which your fates depend,
To every caprice of the sky; nor thwart
The genius of your clime: For from the blood 275
Least fickle rise the recremental steams,
And least obnoxious to the slyptic air,

Which breathe thro' straiter and more callous pores.
The temper'd Scythian hence, half-naked treads
His boundless snows, nor rues th' inclement heaven; 280
And hence our painted ancestors defied
The East: nor curs'd, like us, their fickle sky.

The body, moulded by the clime, endures
Th' Equator heats or Hyperborean frost:
Except by habits foreign to its turn, 285
Unwise you counteract its forming pow'r.
Rude at the first, the winter shocks you less
By long acquaintance: Study then your sky,
Form to its manners your obsequious frame,
And learn to suffer what you cannot shun. 290
Against the rigors of a damp cold heav'n
To fortify their bodies, some frequent
The gelid cistern; and, where nought forbids,
I praise their dauntless heart: A frame so steel'd
Dreads not the cough, nor those ungenial blasts 295
That breathe the Tertian or fell Rheumatism;

The nerves so temper'd never quit their tone,
No chronic languors haunt such hardy breasts.
But all things have their bounds : and he who makes
By daily use the kindest regimen 300
Essential to his health, should never mix
With human kind, nor art nor trade pursue.
He not the safe vicissitudes of life
Without some shock endures ; ill-fitted he
To want the known, or bear unusual things. 305
Besides, the powerful remedies of pain
(Since pain in spite of all our care will come)
Should never with your prosperous days of health
Grow too familiar : For by frequent use
The strongest medicines lose their healing power, 310
And even the surest poisons theirs to kill.

Let those who from the frozen Arctos reach
Parch'd Mauritania, or the sultry West,
Or the wide flood that laves rich Indostan,
Plunge thrice a day, and in the tepid wave 315

Untwist their stubborn pores; that full and free
'Th' evaporation thro' the soften'd skin
May bear proportion to the swelling blood.

So may they 'scape the fever's rapid flames;
So feel untainted the hot breath of hell.

With us, the man of no complaint demands
The warm ablution just enough to clear
The fluices of the skin, enough to keep
The body sacred from indecent foil.

Still to be pure, ev'n did it not conduce
(As much it does) to health, were greatly worth
Your daily pains. 'Tis this adorns the rich;

'The want of this is poverty's worst woe;

With this external virtue Age maintains

A decent grace; without it youth and charms

Are loathsome. This the venal Graces know;

So doubtless do your wives: For married fires,

As well as lovers, still pretend to taste;

Nor is it less (all prudent wives can tell)

To lose a husband's than a lover's heart.

320

325

330

335

But now the hours and seasons when to toil
From foreign themes recall my wandering song.
Some labour fasting, or but slightly fed
To lull the grinding stomach's hungry rage.

Where nature feeds too corpulent a frame 340

'Tis wisely done: For while the thirsty veins,
Impatient of lean penury, devour
The treasur'd oil, then is the happiest time
To shake the lazy balsam from its cells.

Now while the stomach from the full repast 345

Subsides, but ere returning hunger gnaws,
Ye leaner habits, give an hour to toil:
And ye whom no luxuriancy of growth
Oppresses yet, or threatens to oppres.

But from the recent meal no labours please, 350

Of limbs or mind. For now the cordial powers
Claim all the wandering spirits to a work
Of strong and subtle toil, and great event:
A work of time: and you may rue the day
You hurried, with untimely exercise,

355

A half-concocted chyle into the blood.
The body overcharg'd with unctuous phlegm
Much toil demands : The lean elastic less.
While winter chills the blood and binds the veins,
No labours are too hard : By those you 'scape 360
The slow diseases of the torpid year ;
Endless to name ; to one of which alone,
To that which tears the nerves, the toil of slaves
Is pleasure : Oh ! from such inhuman pains
May all be free who merit not the wheel ! 365
But from the burning Lion when the sun
Pours down his sultry wrath ; now while the blood
Too much already maddens in the veins,
And all the finer fluids thro' the skin
Explore their flight ; me, near the cool cascade 370
Reclin'd, or saunt'ring in the lofty grove,
No needless flight occasion should engage
To pant and sweat beneath the fiery noon.
Now the fresh morn alone and mellow eve
To shady walks and active rural sports 375

Invite. But, while the chilling dews descend,
May nothing tempt you to the cold embrace
Of humid skies ; tho' 'tis no vulgar joy
To trace the horrors of the solemn wood
While the soft evening saddens into night : 380
Tho' the sweet Poet of the vernal groves
Melts all the night in strains of am'rous woe.

The shades descend, and midnight o'er the world
Expands her sable wings. Great Nature droops
Thro' all her works. Now happy he whose toil 385
Has o'er his languid powerless limbs diffus'd
A pleasing lassitude : He not in vain
Invokes the gentle Deity of dreams,
His powers the most voluptuously dissolve
In soft repose : On him the balmy dews 390
Of sleep with double nutriment descend.
But would you sweetly waste the blank of night
In deep oblivion ; or on Fancy's wings
Visit the paradise of happy Dreams,

And waken cheerful as the lively morn ; 395

Oppress not Nature sinking down to rest

With feasts too late, too solid, or too full :

But be the first concoction half-matur'd

Ere you to mighty indolence resign

Your passive faculties. He from the toils 400

And troubles of the day to heavier toil

Retires, whom trembling from the tower that rocks

Amid the clouds, or Calpe's hideous height,

The busy dæmons hurl ; or in the main

O'erwhelm ; or bury struggling under ground. 405

Not all a monarch's luxury the woes

Can counterpoise of that most wretched man,

Whose nights are shaken with the frantic fits

Of wild Orestes ; whose delirious brain, 409

Stung by the Furies, works with poison'd thought :

While pale and monstrous painting shocks the soul ;

And mangled consciousness bemoans itself

For ever torn ; and chaos floating round.

What dreams prefage, what dangers these or those

Portend to sanity, tho' prudent fears 415
Reveal'd of old and men of deathless fame,
We would not to the superstitious mind
Suggest new throbs, new vanities of fear.
'Tis ours to teach you from the peaceful night
To banish omens and all restless woes. 420

In study some protract the silent hours,
Which others consecrate to mirth and wine ;
And sleep till noon, and hardly live till night.
But surely this redeems not from the shades
One hour of life. Nor does it nought avail 425
What season you to drowsy Morpheus give
Of th' ever-varying circle of the day ;
Or whether, thro' the tedious winter gloom,
You tempt the midnight or the morning damps.
The body, fresh and vigorous from repose, 430
Defies the early fogs : but, by the toils
Of wakeful day, exhausted and unstrung,
Weakly resists the night's unwholesome breath.

The grand discharge, th' effusion of the skin,
Slowly impair'd, the languid maladies
Creep on, and thro' the sick'ning functions steal.
As, when the chilling East invades the spring,
The delicate Narcissus pines away
In hectic languor ; and a slow disease
Taints all the family of flowers, condemn'd
To cruel heav'ns. But why, already prone
To fade, should beauty cherish it's own bane ?
O shame ! O pity ! nipt with pale Quadrille,
And midnight cares, the bloom of Albion dies !

435

440

By toil subdu'd, the Warrior and the Hind
Sleep fast and deep : their active functions soon
With generous streams the subtle tubes supply ;
And soon the tonic irritable nerves
Feel the fresh impulse and awake the soul.
The sons of indolence with long repose,
Grow torpid ; and with slowest Lethe drunk,
Feebly and lingringly return to life,

445

450

Blunt every sense and pow'rless every limb.

Ye, prone to sleep (whom sleeping most annoys)

On the hard matras or elastic couch 455

Extend your limbs, and wean yourselves from sloth ;

Nor grudge the lean projector, of dry brain

And springy nerves, the blandishments of down :

Nor envy while the buried Bacchanal

Exhales his surfeit in prolixer dreams. 460

He without riot, in the balmy feast

Of life, the wants of nature has supply'd,

Who rises, cool, serene, and full of soul.

But pliant nature more or less demands,

As custom forms her ; and all sudden change 465

She hates of habit, even from bad to good.

If faults in life, or new emergencies,

From habits urge you by long time confirm'd,

Slow may the change arrive, and stage by stage ;

Slow as the shadow o'er the dial moves, 470

Slow as the stealing progress of the year.

Observe the circling year. How unperceiv'd
Her seasons change! Behold! by slow degrees,
Stern Winter tam'd into a ruder Spring;

The ripen'd Spring a milder Summer glows;

475

Departing Summer sheds Pomona's store;

And aged Autumn brews the winter-storm.

Slow as they come, these changes come not void

Of mortal shocks: The cold and torrid reigns,

The two great periods of th' important year,

480

Are in their first approaches seldom safe:

Funereal Autumn all the fickly dread,

And the black fates deform the lovely Spring.

He well advis'd who taught our wiser fires

Early to borrow Muscovy's warm spoils,

485

Ere the first frost has touch'd the tender blade;

And late resign them, tho' the wanton Spring

Should deck her charms with all her sister's rays.

For while the effluence of the skin maintains

Its native measure, the pleuritic Spring

490

Glides harmless by; and Autumn, sick to death

With fallow Quartans, no contagion breathes.

I in prophetic numbers could unfold
The omens of the year : what seasons teem
With what diseases ; what the humid South
Prepares, and what the Demon of the East :
But you perhaps refuse the tedious song.
Besides, whatever plagues in heat, or cold,
Or drought, or moisture dwell, they hurt not you,
Skill'd to correct the vices of the sky,
And taught already how to each extreme
To bend your life. But should the public bane
Infect you ; or some trespass of your own,
Or flaw of nature, hint mortality :
Soon as a not unpleasing horror glides
Along the spine, thro' all your torpid limbs ;
When first the head throbs, or the stomach feels
A sickly load, a weary pain the loins ;
Be Celsus call'd : The Fates come rushing on ;
The rapid Fates admit of no delay.
While wilful you, and fatally secure,
Expect to-morrow's more auspicious fun,

495

500

505

510

The growing pest, whose infancy was weak
And easy vanquish'd, with triumphant sway
O'erpow'rs your life. For want of timely care, 515
Millions have died of medicable wounds.

Ah! in what perils is vain life engag'd !
What flight neglects, what trivial faults destroy
The hardiest frame ! of indolence, of toil,
We die ; of want, of superfluity : 520
The all-surrounding heaven, the vital air,
Is big with death. And, tho' the putrid South
Be shut ; tho' no convulsive agony
Shake, from the deep foundations of the world,
Th' imprison'd plagues ; a secret venom oft 525
Corrupts the air, the water, and the land.
What livid deaths has sad Byzantium seen !
How oft has Cairo, with a mother's woe,
Wept o'er her slaughter'd sons and lonely streets !
Even Albion, girt with less malignant skies, 530
Albion the poison of the Gods has drank,
And felt the sting of monsters all her own.

Ere yet the fell Plantagenets had spent
Their ancient rage, at Bosworth's purple field ;
While, for which tyrant England should receive, 535
Her legions in incestuous murders mix'd,
And daily horrors; till the Fates were drunk
With kindred blood by kindred hands profus'd :
Another plague of more gigantic arm
Arose, a monster never known before, 540
Rear'd from Cocytus it's portentous head.
This rapid Fury not, like other pests,
Pursu'd a gradual course, but in a day
Rush'd as a storm o'er half th' astonish'd isle,
And strew'd with sudden carcases the land. 545

First thro' the shoulders, or whatever part
Was seiz'd the first, a fervid vapour sprung.
With rash combustion thence, the quivering spark
Shot to the heart, and kindled all within;
And soon the surface caught the spreading fires. 550
Thro' all the yielding pores, the melted blood

Gush'd out in smoaky sweats ; but nought assuag'd
The torrid heat within, nor aught reliev'd
The stomach's anguish. With incessant toil,
Desperate of ease, impatient of their pain, 555
They toss'd from side to side. In vain the stream
Ran full and clear, they burnt and thirsted still.
The restless arteries with rapid blood
Beat strong and frequent. Thick and pantingly
The breath was fetch'd, and with huge lab'ring heav'd.
At last a heavy pain oppres'd the head, 561
A wild delirium came ; their weeping friends
Were strangers now, and this no home of theirs.
Harras'd with toil on toil, the sinking powers
Lay prostrate and o'erthrown ; a ponderous sleep 565
Wrapt all the senses up : they slept and died.

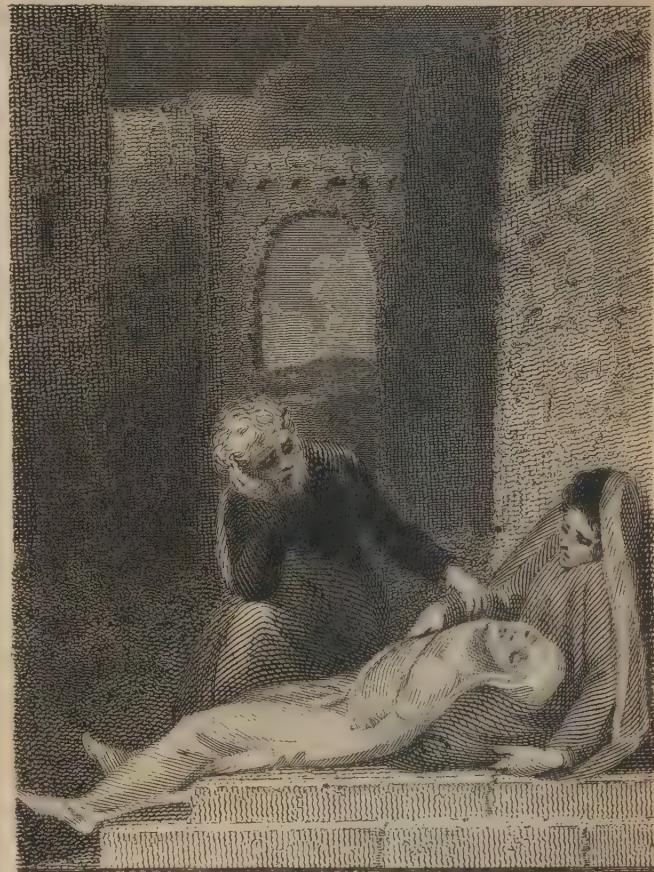
In some a gentle horror crept at first
O'er all the limbs ; the fluices of the skin
Withheld their moisture, till by art provok'd
The sweats o'erflow'd ; but in a clammy tide : 570

Now free and copious, now restrain'd and flow ;
Of tinctures various, as the temperature
Had mix'd the blood ; and rank with fetid steams :
As if the pent-up humours by delay
Were grown more fell, more putrid, and malign. 575
Here lay their hopes (tho' little hope remain'd)
With full effusion of perpetual sweats
To drive the venom out. And here the fates
Were kind, that long they linger'd not in pain.
For who surviv'd the sun's diurnal race 580
Rose from the dreary gates of hell redeem'd :
Some the sixth hour oppress'd, and some the third.

Of many thousands few untainted 'scap'd ;
Of those infected fewer 'scap'd alive ;
Of those who liv'd some felt a second blow ; 585
And whom the second spar'd a third destroy'd.
Frantic with fear, they sought by flight to shun
The fierce contagion. O'er the mournful land
Th' infected city pour'd her hurrying swarms :

Rous'd by the flames that fir'd her seats around, 590
Th' infected country rush'd into the town.
Some, sad at home, and in the desart some,
Abjur'd the fatal commerce of mankind ;
In vain : where'er they fled, the Fates pursu'd.
Others, with hopes more specious, cross'd the main,
To seek protection in far distant skies ; 596
But none they found. It seem'd the general air,
From pole to pole, from Atlas to the East,
Was then at enmity with English blood.
For, but the race of England, all were safe
In foreign climes ; nor did this Fury taste 600
The foreign blood which England then contain'd.
Wherè should they fly ? The circumambient heaven
Involv'd them still ; and every breeze was bane.
Where find relief ? The salutary art
Was mute ; and, startled at the new disease, 605
In fearful whispers hopeless omens gave.
To Heaven with suppliant rites they sent their pray'rs ;
Heav'n heard them not. Of every hope depriv'd ;





T. Stothard R. A. pinx:™

J. Heath sculps:

*'Twas all the Busines then
To tend the sick, and in their turns to die.
In Sloops they fell;*

Fatigu'd with vain resources ; and subdued
With woes resistless and enfeebling fear ; 610
Passive they sunk beneath the weighty blow.
Nothing but lamentable sounds was heard,
Nor aught was seen but ghastly views of death.
Infectious horror ran from face to face,
And pale despair. 'Twas all the business then 615
To tend the sick, and in their turns to die.
In heaps they fell : and oft one bed, they say,
The sick'ning, dying, and the dead contain'd.

Ye guardian Gods, on whom the Fates depend
Of tottering Albion ! ye eternal Fires 620
That lead thro' heav'n the wandering year ! ye powers
That o'er th' incircling elements preside !
May nothing worse than what this age has seen
Arrive ! Enough abroad, enough at home
Has Albion bled. Here a distemper'd heaven 625
Has thin'd her cities ; from those lofty cliffs
That awe proud Gaul, to Thule's wintry reign ;

While in the West, beyond th' Atlantic foam,
Her bravest sons, keen for the fight, have dy'd
The death of cowards and of common men: 630
Sunk void of wounds, and fall'n without renown.

But from these views the weeping Muses turn,
And other themes invite my wandering song.

END OF THE THIRD BOOK.

B O O K IV.

T H E P A S S I O N S.



THE
A R T
OF
PRESERVING HEALTH.

BOOK IV.

THE PASSIONS.

THE choice of Aliment, the choice of Air,
The use of Toil and all external things,
Already fung ; it now remains to trace
What good, what evil from ourselves proceeds :
And how the subtle Principle within
Inspires with health, or mines with strange decay
The passive Body. Ye poetic Shades,
Who know the secrets of the world unseen,

5

Assist my song! For, in a doubtful theme
Engag'd, I wander thro' mysterious ways.

10

There is, they say, (and I believe there is)
A spark within us of th' immortal fire,
That animates and moulds the grosser frame ;
And when the body sinks escapes to heaven,
Its native seat, and mixes with the Gods. 15
Mean while this heavenly particle pervades
The mortal elements ; in every nerve
It thrills with pleasure, or grows mad with pain.
And, in its secret conclave, as it feels
The body's woes and joys, this ruling power 20
Wields at its will the dull material world,
And is the body's health or malady.

By its own toil the gross corporeal frame
Fatigues, extenuates, or destroys itself.
Nor less the labours of the mind corrode 25
The solid fabric : for by subtle parts

And viewles atoms, secret Nature moves
The mighty wheels of this stupendous world.
By subtle fluids pour'd thro' subtle tubes
The natural, vital, functions are perform'd. 30
By these the stubborn aliments are tam'd ;
The toiling heart distributes life and strength ;
These the still-crumbling frame rebuild ; and these
Are lost in thinking, and dissolve in air.

But 'tis not Thought (for still the soul's employ'd) 35
'Tis painful thinking that corrodes our clay.
All day the vacant eye without fatigue
Strays o'er the heaven and earth ; but long intent
On microscopic arts its vigour fails.
Just so the mind, with various thought amus'd, 40
Nor akes itself, nor gives the body pain.
But anxious Study, Discontent, and Care,
Love without hope, and Hate without revenge,
And Fear, and Jealousy, fatigue the soul,
Engross the subtle ministers of life, 45

And spoil the lab'ring functions of their share.
Hence the lean gloom that Melancholy wears ;
The Lover's paleness ; and the fallow hue
Of Envy, Jealousy ; the meagre stare
Of sore Revenge : the canker'd body hence
Betrays each fretful motion of the mind.

50

The strong-built pedant ; who both night and day
Feeds on the coarsest fare the schools bestow,
And crudely fattens at gross Burman's stall ;
O'erwhelm'd with phlegm lies in a dropsy drown'd, 55
Or sinks in lethargy before his time.
With useful studies you, and arts that please
Employ your mind, amuse but not fatigue.
Peace to each drowsy metaphysic sage !
And ever may all heavy systems rest !

60
Yet some there are, even of elastic parts,
Whom strong and obstinate ambition leads
Thro' all the rugged roads of barren lore,
And gives to relish what their generous taste

Would else refuse. But may nor thirst of fame, 65
Nor love of knowledge, urge you to fatigue
With constant drudgery the liberal soul.
Toy with your books: and, as the various fits
Of humour seize you, from Philosophy
To Fable shift; from serious Antonine 70
To Rabelais' ravings, and from prose to song.

While reading pleases, but no longer, read;
And read aloud resounding Homer's strain,
And wield the thunder of Demosthenes.
The chest so exercis'd improves its strength; 75
And quick vibrations thro' the bowels drive
The restless blood, which in unactive days
Would loiter else thro' unelastic tubes.
Deem it not trifling while I recommend
What posture suits: To stand and sit by turns, 80
As nature prompts, is best. But o'er your leaves
To lean for ever, cramps the vital parts,
And robs the fine machinery of its play.

85

'Tis the great art of life to manage well
The restless mind. For ever on pursuit
Of knowledge bent, it starves the grosser powers:
Quite unemploy'd, against its own repose
It turns its fatal edge, and sharper pangs
Than what the body knows embitter life.
Chiefly where Solitude, sad nurse of Care,
To fickly musing gives the penive mind,
There Madnes enters ; and the dim-ey'd Fiend,
Sour Melancholy, night and day provokes
Her own eternal wound. The sun grows pale ;
A mournful visionary light o'erspreads
The cheerful face of nature : earth becomes
A dreary desart, and heaven frowns above.
Then various shapes of curs'd illusion rise :
Whate'er the wretched fears, creating Fear
Forms out of nothing ; and with monsters teems
Unknown in hell. The prostrate soul beneath
A load of huge imagination heaves ;
And all the horrors that the murderer feels
With anxious flutterings wake the guiltless breast.

90

95

100

Such phantoms Pride in solitary scenes, 105
Or Fear, on delicate Self-love creates.
From other cares absolv'd, the busy mind
Finds in yourself a theme to pore upon ;
It finds you miserable, or makes you so.
For while yourself you anxiously explore, 110
Timorous Self-love, with sick'ning Fancy's aid,
Presents the danger that you dread the most,
And ever galls you in your tender part.
Hence some for love, and some for jealousy,
For grim religion some, and some for pride, 115
Have lost their reason : some for fear of want
Want all their lives ; and others every day
For fear of dying suffer worse than death.
Ah ! from your bosoms banish, if you can,
Those fatal guests : and first the Dæmon Fear ; 120
That trembles at impossible events,
Lest aged Atlas should resign his load,
And heaven's eternal battlements rush down.
Is there an evil worse than Fear itself ?

And what avails it, that indulgent heaven
From mortal eyes has wrapt the woes to come,
If we, ingenious to torment ourselves,
Grow pale at hideous fictions of our own ?
Enjoy the present ; nor with needless cares,
Of what may spring from blind misfortune's womb,
Appall the surest hour that life bestows.
Serene, and master of yourself, prepare
For what may come ; and leave the rest to Heaven.

Oft from the Body, by long ails mistun'd,
These evils sprung the most important health, 135
That of the Mind, destroy: and when the mind
They first invade, the conscious body soon
In sympathetic languishment declines.
These chronic Passions, while from real woes
They rise, and yet without the body's fault 140
Infest the soul, admit one only cure;
Diversion, hurry, and a restless life.
Vain are the consolations of the wise;

In vain your friends would reason down your pain.

O ye, whose souls relentless love has tam'd 145

To soft distress, or friends untimely fall'n !

Court not the luxury of tender thought ;

Nor deem it impious to forget those pains

That hurt the living, nought avail the dead.

Go, soft enthusiast ! quit the cypress groves, 150

Nor to the rivulet's lonely moanings tune

Your sad complaint. Go, seek the cheerful haunts

Of men, and mingle with the bustling crowd ;

Lay schemes for wealth, or power, or fame, the wish

Of nobler minds, and push them night and day. 155

Or join the caravan in quest of scenes

New to your eyes, and shifting every hour,

Beyond the Alps, beyond the Apennines.

Or more advent'rous, rush into the field

Where war grows hot ; and, raging thro' the sky, 160

The lofty trumpet swells the madd'ning soul :

And in the hardy camp and toilsome march

Forget all softer and less manly cares.

But most too passive, when the blood runs low,
Too weakly indolent to strive with pain, 165
And bravely by resisting conquer Fate,
Try Circe's arts; and in the tempting bowl
Of poison'd Nectar sweet oblivion swill.
Struck by the pow'rful charm, the gloom dissolves
In empty air; Elysium opens round, 170
A pleasing phrenzy buoys the lighten'd soul,
And sanguine hopes dispel your fleeting care;
And what was difficult, and what was dire,
Yields to your prowess and superior stars:
The happiest you of all that e'er were mad, 175
Or are, or shall be, could this folly last.
But soon your heaven is gone; a heavier gloom
Shuts o'er your head: and as the thund'ring stream,
Swoln o'er its banks with sudden mountain rain,
Sinks from its tumult to a silent brook; 180
So, when the frantic raptures in your breast
Subside, you languish into mortal man;
You sleep, and waking find yourself undone.

For prodigal of life, in one rash night
You lavish'd more than might support three days. 185
A heavy morning comes; your cares return
With tenfold rage. An anxious stomach well
May be endur'd; so may the throbbing head:
But such a dim delirium, such a dream,
Involves you; such a dastardly despair 190
Unmans your soul, as madd'ning Pentheus felt,
When, baited round Cithæron's cruel sides,
He saw two Suns, and double Thebes ascend.
You curse the sluggish Port; you curse the wretch,
The felon, with unnatural mixture first 195
Who dar'd to violate the virgin Wine.
Or on the fugitive Champain you pour
A thousand curses; for to heav'n it wrapt
Your soul, to plunge you deeper in despair.
Perhaps you rue even that divinest gift, 200
The gay, serene, good-natur'd Burgundy,
Or the fresh fragrant vintage of the Rhine:
And wish that heaven from mortals had with-held
The grape, and all intoxicating bowls.

Besides, it wounds you sore to recollect
 What follies in your lose unguarded hour
 Escap'd. For one irrevocable word,
 Perhaps that meant no harm, you lose a friend.
 Or in the rage of wine your hasty hand
 Performs a deed to haunt you to the grave.
 Add that your means, your health, your parts decay ;
 Your friends avoid you ; brutishly transform'd
 They hardly know you ; or if one remains
 To wish you well, he wishes you in heaven.
 Despis'd, unwept you fall ; who might have left
 A sacred, cherish'd, sadly-pleasing name ;
 A name still to be utter'd with a sigh.
 Your last ungraceful scene has quite effac'd
 All sense and memory of your former worth.

How to live happiest ; how avoid the pains,
 The disappointments, and disgusts of those
 Who would in pleasure all their hours employ ;
 The Precepts here of a divine old man

I could recite. 'Tho' old, he still retain'd
His manly sense, and energy of mind.
Virtuous and wise he was, but not severé ;
He still remember'd that he once was young ;
His easy presence check'd no decent joy.
Him even the dissolute admir'd ; for he
A graceful looseness when he pleas'd put on,
And laughing could instruct. Much had he read,
Much more had seen ; he studied from the life,
And in th' original perus'd mankind.

225

230

Vers'd in the woes and vanities of life,
He pitied Man : and much he pitied those
Whom falsely-smiling Fate has curs'd with means
To dissipate their days in quest of joy.
Our aim is happiness ; 'tis yours, 'tis mine,
He said, 'tis the pursuit of all that live ;
Yet few attain it, if 'twas e'er attain'd.
But they the widest wander from the mark,
Who thro' the flowery paths of faunt'ring Joy

235

240

Seek this coy Goddess ; that from stage to stage
Invites us still, but shifts as we pursue.

For, not to name the pains that pleasure brings

245

To counterpoise itself, relentless Fate

Forbids that we thro' gay voluptuous wilds

Should ever roam : and were the Fates more kind,

Our narrow luxuries would soon grow stale.

Were these exhaustless, Nature would grow sick,

250

And, cloy'd with pleasure, squeamishly complain

That all is vanity, and life a dream.

Let nature rest : be busy for yourself,

And for your friend ; be busy even in vain

Rather than tease her fated appetites.

255

Who never fasts, no banquet e'er enjoys ;

Who never toils or watches, never sleeps.

Let nature rest : and when the taste of joy

Grows keen, indulge ; but shun satiety.

'Tis not for mortals always to be blest.

260

But him the least the dull or painful hours

Of life oppres, whom sober Sense conducts,
And Virtue, thro' this labyrinth we tread.
Virtue and Sense I mean not to disjoin ;
Virtue and Sense are one : and, trust me, still 265
A faithless Heart betrays the Head unsound.
Virtue (for mere Good-nature is a fool)
Is Sense and Spirit, with Humanity :
'Tis sometimes angry, and its frown confounds ;
'Tis even vindictive, but in vengeance just. 270
Knaves fain would laugh at it ; some great ones dare ;
But at his heart the most undaunted son
Of fortune dreads its name and awful charms.
To noblest uses this determines wealth ;
This is the solid pomp of prosperous days ; 275
The peace and shelter of adversity.
And if you pant for glory, build your fame
On this foundation, which the secret shock
Defies of Envy and all-fapping Time.
The gawdy glo's of fortune only strikes 280
The vulgar eye : the suffrage of the wife

The praise that's worth ambition, is attain'd
By Sense alone, and dignity of mind.

Virtue, the strength and beauty of the soul,
Is the best gift of heaven : a happiness

285

That even above the smiles and frowns of fate
Exalts great Nature's favourites : a wealth
That ne'er encumbers, nor can be transferr'd.

Riches are oft by guilt and baseness earn'd ;
Or dealt by chance, to shield a lucky knave,
Or throw a cruel sunshine on a fool.

290

But for one end, one much-neglected use,
Are riches worth your care : (for Nature's wants
Are few, and without opulence supply'd.)

This noble end is, to produce the Soul ;
To shew the virtues in their fairest light ;
To make Humanity the Minister
Of bounteous Providence ; and teach the breast
That generous luxury the Gods enjoy.

295

Thus, in his graver vein, the friendly Sage 300
Sometimes claim'd. Of Right and Wrong he taught
Truths as refin'd as ever Athens heard;
And (strange to tell!) he practis'd what he preach'd.
Skill'd in the Passions, how to check their sway
He knew, as far as Reason can controul 305
The lawless Powers. But other cares are mine :
Form'd in the school of Pæon, I relate
What Passions hurt the body, what improve :
Avoid them, or invite them, as you may.

Know then, whatever cheerful and serene 310
Supports the mind, supports the body too.
Hence, the most vital movement mortals feel
Is Hope ; the balm and life-blood of the soul.
It pleases, and it lasts. Indulgent heaven
Sent down the kind delusion, thro' the paths 315
Of rugged life to lead us patient on ;
And make our happiest state no tedious thing.

Our greatest good, and what we least can spare,
Is Hope: the last of all our evils, Fear.

But there are Passions grateful to the breast, 320
And yet no friends to Life: perhaps they please
Or to excess, and dissipate the soul;
Or while they please, torment. The stubborn Clown,
The ill-tam'd Ruffian, and pale Usurer,
(If Love's omnipotence such hearts can mould) 325
May safely mellow into love; and grow
Refin'd, humane, and generous, if they can.
Love in such bosoms never to a fault
Or pains or pleases. But, ye finer Souls,
Form'd to soft luxury, and prompt to thrill 330
With all the tumults, all the joys and pains,
That beauty gives; with caution and reserve
Indulge the sweet destroyer of repose,
Nor court too much the Queen of charming cares.
For, while the cherish'd poison in your breast 335
Ferments and maddens; sick with jealousy,

Absence, distrust, or even with anxious joy,
The wholesome appetites and powers of life
Dissolve in languor. The coy stomach loaths
The genial board: Your cheerful days are gone; 340
The generous bloom that flush'd your cheeks is fled.
To sighs devoted and to tender pains,
Pensive you sit, or solitary stray,
And waste your youth in musing. Musing first
Toy'd into care your unsuspecting heart: 345
It found a liking there, a sportful fire,
And that fomented into serious love;
Which musing daily strengthens and improves
Thro' all the heights of fondness and romance:
And you're undone, the fatal shaft has sped, 350
If once you doubt whether you love or no.
The body wastes away; th' infected mind,
Dissolv'd in female tenderness, forgets
Each manly virtue, and grows dead to fame.
Sweet heaven from such intoxicating charms 355
Defend all worthy breasts! Not that I deem

Love always dangerous, always to be shun'd.

Love well repaid, and not too weakly funk

In wanton and unmanly tenderneſs,

Adds bloom to Health ; o'er ev'ry virtue sheds

360

A gay, humane, a sweet, and generous grace,

And brightens all the ornaments of man.

But fruitleſs, hopeleſs, disappointed, rack'd

With jealousy, fatigu'd with hope and fear,

Too ſerious, or too languiſhingly fond,

365

Unnerves the body, and unmans the ſoul.

And ſome have died for love ; and ſome run mad ;

And ſome with desperate hands themſelves have slain.

Some to extinguiſh, others to prevent,

A mad devotion to one dangerous Fair,

370

Court all they meet ; in hopes to diſſipate

The cares of Love amongſt an hundred Brides.

Th' event is doubtful : for there are who find

A cure in this ; there are who find it not.

'T is no relief, alas ! it rather galls

375

The wound, to those who are sincerely sick.
For while from feverish and tumultuous joys
The nerves grow languid and the soul subsides,
The tender fancy smarts with every sting,
And what was Love before is Madness now.

380

Is health your care, or luxury your aim,
Be temperate still: When Nature bids, obey;
Her wild impatient fancies bear no curb:
But when the prurient habit of delight,
Or loose Imagination, spurs you on.

385

To deeds above your strength, impute it not
To Nature: Nature all compulsion hates.
Ah! let nor luxury nor vain renown
Urge you to feats you well might sleep without;

To make what should be rapture a fatigue,

390

A tedious task; nor in the wanton arms
Of twining Laïs melt your manhood down.
For from the colliquation of soft joys
How chang'd you rise! the ghost of what you was!
Languid, and melancholy, and gaunt, and wan;

395

Your veins exhausted, and your nerves unstrung.

Spoil'd of its balm and sprightly zest, the blood

Grows vapid phlegm ; along the tender nerves

(To each flight impulse tremblingly awake)

A subtle Fiend that mimics all the plagues

400

Rapid and restless springs from part to part.

The blooming honours of your youth are fallen ;

Your vigour pines ; your vital powers decay ;

Diseases haunt you ; and untimely Age

Creeps on ; unsocial, impotent, and lewd.

405

Infatuate, impious, epicure ! to waste

The stores of pleasure, cheerfulness, and health !

Infatuate all who make delight their trade,

And coy perdition every hour pursue.

Who pines with Love, or in lascivious flames

410

Consumes, is with his own consent undone ;

He chuses to be wretched, to be mad ;

And warn'd proceeds and wilful to his fate.

But there's a Passion, whose tempestuous sway

Tears up each virtue planted in the breast, 415
And shakes to ruins proud Philosophy.
For pale and trembling Anger rushes in,
With fault'ring speech, and eyes that wildly stare ;
Fierce as the Tiger, madder than the seas,
Desperate, and arm'd with more than human strength.
How soon the calm, humane, and polish'd man 421
Forgets compunction, and starts up a fiend !
Who pines in Love, or wastes with silent Cares,
Envy, or ignominy, or tender grief,
Slowly descends, and ling'ring, to the shades. 425
But he whom Anger stings, drops, if he dies,
At once, and rushes apoplectic down ;
Or a fierce fever hurries him to hell.
For, as the Body thro' unnumber'd strings
Reverberates each vibration of the Soul ; 430
As is the Passion, such is still the Pain
The Body feels : or chronic, or acute.
And oft a sudden storm at once o'erpowers
The Life, or gives your Reason to the winds.

Such fates attend the rash alarm of Fear,

435

And sudden Grief, and Rage, and sudden Joy.

There are, mean time, to whom the boist'rous fit

Is Health, and only fills the sails of life.

For where the mind a torpid winter leads,

Wrapt in a body corpulent and cold,

440

And each clogg'd function lazily moves on ;

A generous sally spurns th' incumbent load,

Unlocks the breast, and gives a cordial glow.

But if your wrathful blood is apt to boil,

Or are your nerves too irritably strung,

445

Wave all dispute ; be cautious, if you joke ;

Keep Lent for ever ; and forswear the Bowl.

For one rash moment fends you to the shades,

Or shatters ev'ry hopeful scheme of life,

And gives to horror all your days to come.

450

Fate, arm'd with thunder, fire, and ev'ry plague,

'That ruins, tortures, or distracts mankind,

And makes the happy wretched in an hour.

O'erwhelms you not with woes so horrible
As your own wrath, nor gives more sudden blows. 455

While Choler works, good Friend, you may be wrong ;
Distrust yourself, and sleep before you fight.
'Tis not too late to-morrow to be brave ;
If honour bids, to-morrow kill or die.

But calm advice against a raging fit 460

Avails too little ; and it braves the power
Of all that ever taught in Prose or Song,
To tame the Fiend that sleeps a gentle Lamb,
And wakes a Lion. Unprovok'd and calm,

You reason well ; see as you ought to see, 465

And wonder at the madness of mankind :
Seiz'd with the common rage, you soon forget
The speculations of your wiser hours.

Beset with Furies of all deadly shapes,
Fierce and insidious, violent and slow : 470

With all that urge or lure us on to Fate :
What refuge shall we seek ? what arms prepare ?

Where Reason proves too weak, or void of wiles
 To cope with subtle or impetuous powers,
 I would invoke new Passions to your aid : 475
 With Indignation would extinguish Fear,
 With Fear or generous Pity vanquish Rage,
 And Love with Pride ; and force to force oppose.

There is a Charm, a Power, that sways the breast ;
 Bids every Passion revel or be still ; 480
 Inspires with Rage, or all your Cares dissolves ;
 Can sooth Distraction, and almost Despair.
 That power is Music : Far beyond the stretch
 Of those unmeaning warblers on our stage ;
 Those clumsy Heroes, those fat-headed Gods, 485
 Who move no passion justly but Contempt :
 Who, like our dancers (light indeed and strong !)
 Do wond'rous feats, but never heard of grace.
 The fault is ours ; we bear those monstrous arts ;
 Good Heaven ! we praise them : we, with loudest peals,
 Applaud the fool that highest lifts his heels ; 491



T. Stothard, R.A. pinx.

I. Parker sculp.

*Such was the Bard, whose heav'ny Strains of old
Appeas'd the Fiend of melancholy Saul.*

And, with insipid shew of rapture, die
Of ideot notes impertinently long.
But he the Muse's laurel justly shares,
A Poet he, and touch'd with Heaven's own fire ; 495
Who, with bold rage or solemn pomp of sounds,
Inflames, exalts, and ravishes the soul ;
Now tender, plaintive, sweet almost to pain,
In Love dissolves you ; now in sprightly strains
Breathes a gay rapture thro' your thrilling breast ; 500
Or melts the heart with airs divinely sad ;
Or wakes to horror the tremendous strings.
Such was the Bard, whose heavenly strains of old
Appeas'd the fiend of melancholy Saul.
Such was, if old and heathen fame say true, 505
The man who bade the Theban domes ascend,
And tam'd the savage nations with his song ;
And such the Thracian, whose melodious lyre,
Tun'd to soft woe, made all the mountains weep ;
Sooth'd even th' inexorable powers of Hell, 510
And half redeem'd his lost Eurydice.

Music exalts each Joy, allays each Grief,
Expels Diseases, softens every Pain,
Subdues the rage of Poifon, and the Plague;
And hence the wife of ancient days ador'd
One Power of Phyfic, Melody, and Song.

THE END.

ESSAY ON SEPULCHRES.



Hilton del.

Hopwood sculp.

Life is the Desert and the Solitude

Published by William Miller, Albemarle Street, Feb. 1, 1809

W. Bullock's Essays

ESSAY.

ON

SEPULCHRES:

OR,

A PROPOSAL FOR ERECTING SOME
MEMORIAL OF THE ILLUSTRIOUS
DEAD IN ALL AGES ON THE SPOT
WHERE THEIR REMAINS HAVE
BEEN INTERRED.

BY WILLIAM GODWIN.

Not one of these should perish.

THE BIBLE.

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR W: MILLER, ALBEMARLE
STREET.

1809.

Printed by B. M^{CM}illan,
Bow Street, Covent Garden. }

PREFACE.

IN my conduct as the author of the following pages, I have endeavoured to conform myself to a well-known canon of criticism, To write with fervour, and to revise at leisure.

Whether they contain a plan capable of being reduced to practice, or are to be considered as a speculation and solemn reverie

merely, I desire not, and I scarcely feel myself competent, to pronounce. I divulge them purely by way of *tentamen* or experiment: “Darkly a project peers upon my mind:” they are rudely drawn, and want much of detail and minute reflection and explanation, before they can be considered as complete. I deliver what has passed through my mind, for the meditation of other men who may regard the subject treated of as worthy their attention. Yet I have endeav-

voured to anticipate a multitudc
of objections that might offer
themselves, and to fortify my
suggestion against the ordinary
weapons of controversy, as fully
as I was able.

In the very heat and crisis of
my enthusiasm, I never antici-
pated any thing better, than the
adoption of this plan, or some-
thing like this, ten or twenty
years hence, when I also should
be deposited in the grave. I
have none of the qualifications

that befit the institutor and leader of a public undertaking. I am a man of no fortune or consequence in my country ; I am the adherent of no party ; I have passed the greater part of my life in solitude and retirement ; there are numbers of men who overflow with gall and prejudice against me (God bless them !), and would strenuously resist a proposal I made, though it were such as from any other quarter they would accept with thankfulness.

One other remark is almost too obvious to be stated. Whatever is wholly new, is sure to be pronounced by the mass of mankind to be impracticable ; the discovery of gunpowder, the discovery of printing, the discovery of America, or any other novelty, of however great, or however minute a scale it may be.

On this point then I have nothing further to say, than— Whether the present proposal, or any thing like the present, be

practicable, I presume not to decide: but I do affirm, that, if capable of being reduced to practice, it is a scheme fraught with great and certain benefit to the human race.

It will be asked, by all those who love to cavil, and by some of the sincere, If your proposal is impracticable, why then is it published?

To this my answer is simple.

First, I do not know (at least with certain modifications and improvements which might afterward be introduced) that it is impracticable.

Secondly, taking it for granted that as a proposal it is wholly visionary, that does not appear to me a sufficient reason why, as a train of thinking on a certain subject, it should be suppressed. The views into which I have been led, as to the effects flowing from the mortality of

man to human affairs, and the feelings and sentiments it becomes us to cherish respecting the Illustrious Dead, I apprehend to be reasonable and true. Inestimable benefit will in my opinion flow, from the habit of seeing with the intellectual eye things not visible to the eye of sense, and our attaining the craft and mystery, by which we may, spiritually, each in his several sphere,

Compel the earth and ocean to give up
Their dead alive.

For just so much time as any one shall spend in reading and meditating on the suggestions of these pages, provided it be done in a serious frame, the project is a reality, and is as if it were executed : and I hope most persons who shall be induced to examine these hints, will derive from them a solemnity and composure of spirit, which so far as it operates at all, will be favourable to elevation of mind, to generous action, and to virtue.

To conclude: I trust that none of my readers will be erroneous enough to consider the vivid recollection of things past, as hostile to that tone of spirit which should aspire to the boldest improvements in future. The genuine heroes of the times that have been, were the reformers, the instructors, and improvers of their contemporaries; and he is the sincerest admirer of these men, who most earnestly aspires to become “like unto them.”

Jan. 21, 1809.

A PROPOSAL FOR ERECTING SOME
MEMORIAL OF THE ILLUSTRI-
OUS DEAD IN ALL AGES ON THE
SPOT WHERE THEIR REMAINS
HAVE BEEN INTERRED.

THIS might be effected by an extensive private subscription.

A charter should then be obtained for the purpose of giving permanence to the institution; and the funds, if considerable, might be appropriated to other purposes analogous to the original object.

A very slight and cheap memorial, a white cross of wood, with a wooden

slab at the foot of it (where the body had been interred in the open air), would be sufficient, if means were taken to secure its being renewed as fast as the materials decayed.

Objections considered.

TWO trite and obvious objections may be urged against this proposal. I will state these objections, and assume them as topics naturally leading me to the principal arguments in its favour.

I.
Worthless-
ness of a
dead body.

I know (first) that “ scarcely any thing can appear to be of less value, and nothing less admirable,

than a dead human body." When the intellectual spirit is gone, the carcass of a man appears to be altogether worthless; and accordingly certain philosophers have expressed themselves altogether indifferent, whether their bodies, after death, were suspended in the air, or committed to the ocean, hidden in the bowels of the earth, or exposed on its surface to be devoured by beasts of prey.

But this is to consider the subject too poorly and literally. It proceeds on the plan of regarding man

Answered,
from considera-
tions drawn from
imagination and the
moral sense.

as the mere creature of abstractions and mathematical or syllogistical deduction, not taking into account the operation of human imagination and human feelings.

To the dead man (as a dead man) it is indeed a matter of indifference what becomes of his body. But to the dead man, if we take into account his nature while living, as a creature “looking before and after,” and capable of imaging out and dwelling upon the things that shall be, it may not be indifferent.

But let us put out of the question for the present the dead man himself, and think only of survivors.

I will illustrate this by an individual case. I have been long and intimately acquainted, I suppose, with some great and excellent man, great in intellect as Homer, or excellent in the principles that guided his conduct as Aristides. I confess myself unable to tell how intellect operates. I am more inclined to the opinion of the immaterialists, than of the material- A case stated.

ists. But my acquaintance with the thoughts and the virtues of my friend, has been made through my eyes and my ears. Though I should adopt the creed of bishop Berkeley, and believe that the body of my friend, the vehicle through which the knowledge of these thoughts and virtues was conveyed to me, was nothing, yet I can never separate my idea of his peculiarities and his actions, from my idea of his person. I cannot love my friend, without loving his person. It is in this way that every thing which practically has been

associated with my friend, acquires a value from that consideration; his ring, his watch, his books, and his habitation. The value of these as having been his, is not merely fictitious; they have an empire over my mind; they can make me happy or unhappy; they can torture, and they can tranquillise; they can purify my sentiments, and make me similar to the man I love; they possess the virtue which the Indian is said to attribute to the spoils of him he kills, and inspire me with the powers,

the feelings and the heart of their preceding master.

Death, the
death of a
friend,
what.

The greatest of earthly calamities, and the most universal, is death. The calamity is perhaps greater to him that survives, than to him that dies. The effects of this calamity are beyond all the powers of calculation to reach. When a great and excellent man dies, the chief part of what he was (at least so far as this world is concerned) perishes. It is very little of him that survives, in his memory,

and his works. The use and application of his experience, the counsels he could give, the firmness and sagacity with which he could have executed what he might have thus counselled, are gone. He had accumulated, it may be, great stores of learning ; by long exercise he had refined his taste ; he had collated facts ; he had drawn the most curious conclusions. You might converse with this man incessantly for a year, and might learn something from him every day. After that, let us consider how many parts of his skill never

came forward as topics of conversation, and what extensive portions of learning and observation existed in him, that were never poured out upon you. It is impossible to calculate how much of good perishes, when a great and excellent man dies. It is owing to this calamity of death, that the world for ever is, and in some degree for ever must be, in its infancy.

My friend, as long as he lived, was in a certain sense every thing to me. His society was my delight. To anticipate the seasons

when I should enjoy that society, was the balm of my life. His presence, his countenance, what a solid and substantial good I derived from them! His voice, the spirit that flew from his eye and penetrated into my soul, no tongue can express the comfort I derived from these. I could resort to him for counsel whenever I pleased. The consolation under affliction that I drew from his sympathy; the gaiety with which his sallies would occasionally inspire me, enabling me to bear up under the cross accidents and heart-breaking

disappointments of life, were benefits, the greatest that can fall to the lot of a human creature. He was to a considerable extent all that we believe of high, noble and admirable in our nature personified. My personal knowledge of him, was the sustainer of my faith, my antidote against misanthropy, the sunshine which gilded the otherwise gloomy and cheerless scenes of this sublunary state. It is much to lose such a man.

But this is not all. If this friend were my familiar acquaintance, if

he dwelt under the same roof with me, if (to put the strongest case) I were so fortunate that the person worthy of all this encomium were the wife of my bosom, there is something in the nature of which we partake, that gives a value to such a possession beyond its abstract and intrinsic merits. One of the silliest fancies that has been started by the rigid advocates of the equality of our nature, is, that we are wrong to pity a person of high rank under adversity, a king in exile, Louis XVI in the Temple, Marie Antoinette in the *Conciergerie*, more than the meanest pea-

sant under a similar misfortune. I do not condole with a man because he never had a thing, but because, having once possessed, he has now lost it. Human beings are the creatures of circumstances. The good thing I have long enjoyed, by habit has become necessary to me, and I cannot be resigned or patient under the privation of it. This remark applies more acutely to the loss of a human friend and associate, than to any other calamity.

Death, the death of a friend, is a terrible thing ; and it is rendered

more terrible by all its accompaniments. Other good things, health, fortune, even character, if we lose, we ordinarily lose by degrees. But my friend who dies, I lose at once. But now, and he was all that I valued ; and now, in a moment, to me, the living inhabitant of the earth, he is nothing.

His form was pleasant to me ; his motions were full of mind ; his person was a little world, through every region of which thought, and will, and health, and vigour, and spirits cheerfully circulated. This

Sentiments
which be-
long to the
remains of
a friend.

form is all that is now left of him. But, oh, how changed! I would give all that I possess, to purchase the art of preserving the wholesome character and rosy hue of this form, that it might be my companion still. But by the law of nature it is subject to changes the most incompatible with this. The dead body of a man, is reserved by the system of the universe to be the great example to us, of the degradation of our nature, and the humility of our origin. I therefore cast a heap of mould upon the person of my

friend, and take the cold earth for its keeper.

But my thoughts will not stop here. Where is my friend? As to the thinking principle which animated him; I can follow it, by the close deductions of reasoning, or by the suggestions of faith, through the vast regions of space, and see “the spirit return to God that gave it.” But this is reasoning and faith; and I am to a considerable degree the creature of sense. It is impossible therefore that I should not follow by sense

the last remains of my friend; and finding him no where above the surface of the earth, should not feel an attachment to the spot where his body has been deposited. *His* heart must be “made of impenetrable stuff,” who does not attribute a certain sacredness to the grave of one he loved, and feel peculiar emotions stirring in his soul as he approaches it.

All this consideration of *hic jacet*, it must be granted, is very little. But such is the system of the universe, that it is all that we

have for it. It is our only reality. The solidity of the rest, the works of my friend, the words, the actions, the conclusions of reasoning and the suggestions of faith, we feel to depend, as far as they are solid to us, upon the operations of our own mind. They stand, and are the sponsors, for my friend; but what the grave incloses is himself.

So much for the reasonableness, the unavoidableness, of our regard for the spot where the remains of

a great and excellent man have been deposited.

II.
Second ob-
jection.
The useless-
ness of mo-
ney ex-
pended on
tombs.

The second objection that may be urged against the erecting memorials over the graves of the dead, is in the same spirit as the first. It proceeds upon a cold, calculating, literal principle. "We had better," say these objectors, "feed the living, than expend what we have upon the posthumous, and already extinguished, vanity of the dead."

Distribu-
tion of pro-

No one can more cheerfully con-

cur than I am willing to do, in property considered.
the premises from which these ob-
jectors draw their conclusions.

There is but a certain quantity of
good, substance, property, in the
world; labour is the source of pro-
perty; and materials, the materials
of which monuments, and houses,
a king's crown, and a queen's
birth-night attire, are composed,
are valuable just in proportion to
the labour bestowed upon them.
The soundest morality would di-
rect, impartially and in all cases,
that the property existing in any
society should be employed in

such a way, as should most conduce to the welfare of the members of that society. If this morality which I avow, is stricter and more severe than almost any which is generally admitted, the objection, so far as it is of any force, will apply more emphatically to mine, than to any of the systems thus admitted.

The two parts of our nature, body and mind.

But this consideration must not be expounded too literally. If it were, nothing would be valuable in the world, but food, lodging and clothes. Not halls only and palaces, but libraries also, would be

unnecessary.—We should always remember that in man there is a mind to be fed, as well as a body. It is of more importance that man should be a virtuous and an honourable creature, than that he should merely be. I do not at present plead with savages, or the advocates of a savage state. I take it for granted, that man has an understanding to be matured, an imagination, or which is nearly the same thing, a moral sense, to be developed, and even a taste to be refined. Libraries therefore are good things. It is fit that learn-

ing and science should be cultivated, and that the powers of genius should be countenanced and encouraged. Even painting, sculpture, and music, are arts that deserve to be cherished.

If this be true, then we are no longer to confine our thoughts to the mere feeding of the human race, but are bound also to consider and commend every thing which tends to unfold and improve the noblest powers of man. Those things, whatever they are, are deserving of expence, which contribute to

the use of man as a compound and heaven-born creature. Away then with the base and sordid insinuation of Pope in the case of Sheffield duke of Buckinghamshire, who, he says, “helped to bury, whom he helped to starve* !” If

* It is said, in the notes to the later editions of Pope, that the person intended here was, not the duke of Buckinghamshire who erected the monument to Dryden, but the earl of Halifax. I am myself not well read in the *Bufos*, the *Artemisias*, and the *Phrynes*, the kindnesses [his friendships were sacred] hastily formed, and as abruptly discarded, of our English Horace. To my point however this question is immaterial. The writer

Sheffield refused any reasonable kindness to the living Dryden, he was worthy of blame ; but inasmuch as he erected a tomb to his memory, if this were a useful action, he did well : and the deed is so much the more entitled to commendation, as it is refined, and remote from the grosser conceptions

who thought it of no moment *where* Dryden was buried [“ By the contribution of several persons of quality,” says Warburton on the passage, a funeral was bestowed on him in Westminster Abbey], must have been as little anxious whether the place of his interment *were* remembered or forgotten.

of the majority of the species, who are too apt to consider man merely as an animal to be fed.

Where is Shakespear ? Where is Homer ? Can any sensible mind fail to be struck with the deepest regret, when he considers that they are vanished from the face of the earth, and that their place is too probably filled up by some sleepy and lethargic animal, "dressed in a brief authority," pampering his appetites, vapouring his hour, and encumbering the soil which his predecessor adorned ? While

Advan-
tages of ho-
nouring the
dead.

we regret then in this case the inexorable law of our nature, let us seize on what we can. Let us mark the spot, whenever it can be ascertained, hallowed by the reception of all that was mortal of these glorious beings ; let us erect a shrine to their memory ; let us visit their tombs ; let us indulge all the reality we can now have, of a sort of conference with these men, by repairing to the scene which, as far as they are at all on earth, *they still inhabit !* We are in no danger, in the present temper of European mind, of falling

into idolatry toward them: but obdurate must be the mind of him, who will bring away no good feelings and no generous sentiments from such a visit.

Men are apt to grow, in the apostolical phrase, too “worldly:” the propensity of our nature, or rather the operation of our state, is to plunge us, the lower orders of the community, in the concerns

f the day, and their masters, in the cares of wealth and gain. It is good for us, sometimes to be “in the mount.” Those things are to

be cherished, which tend to elevate us above our ordinary sphere, and to abstract us from our common and every-day concerns. The affectionate recollection and admiration of the dead will act gently upon our spirits, and fill us with a composed seriousness, favourable to the best and most honourable contemplations.

Present
state of mo-
numental
honours.

Many accidents have insensibly led me into the train of thinking which gave birth to these papers. I think it may answer some purpose to recollect these accidents.

One of them was a visit to West-^{Westmin-}
minster Abbey. In what is called
the Open Part of the Abbey, are to
be found the tombs of many of our
great literary characters, mixed
with those of others who had a very
slight claim to such a distinction.
In the Inclosed Part the spectator
is much more struck with the ca-
priciousness of the muse of monu-
mental fame. Except the kings
down to those of the house of
Stuart, he looks in vain for the
tombs of almost all the great men
that have adorned our annals. In-
stead of Simon Montfort, and

Stephen Langton, and Wickliffe, and the Montacutes, and the Nevilles, and cardinal Wolsey, and Cranmer, and sir Philip Sidney, and lord chancellor Bacon, and multitudes of others, that offer themselves to the memory, we find sir John Pickering, and sir James Puckeridge, and sir Bernard Brocas, who lost his head in the cause of Richard II, and colonel Popham, and Thomas Thynne, who is immortalised for having been shot in his coach, and Mrs. Nightingale. There is good reason for the absence of most, if not all, of

the worthies above mentioned. I am no friend to cenotaphs. Nor would I be overnice in censorship over the illustrious dead; whoever has been truly distinguished for talent or action, I should hold worthy of a place; the tomb of Cromwel would teach me many instructive lessons; nor should I object to the monumental record of judge Tresilian, or Titus Oates. It is fit that men, the scourges of their species, or who have memorably dishonoured the figure of man, should be marked with a brand as imperishable, as the pure Liberal allowance a, to who are entitled to monumen- tal honour, recom- mended

immortality that attends on our genuine benefactors. Nor do I know that it is worth while, by act of parliament or otherwise, to exclude those persons, who owe their monuments to the mere accident of a surviving relative having a few hundred pounds, which he chose to appropriate in this way. All has its moral. Their tombs are infected with the perishable quality of their histories.

But without imputing any blame to the monumental department of Westminster Abbey in these points,

the thinking spectator will not fail to be struck with the mistake under which he laboured, if he repaired thither in the apprehension that he should be presented with the record of all that is most illustrious which this island has produced.

But the most important consideration leading to the plan here suggested, is the perishableness of monuments.

Perishable-
ness of mo-
numents.

When I first read Horace's *Ex-egi monumentum ære perennius,*

what principally struck me was the assuming tone and arrogance of the man, who could bring himself to speak in this style of his own works. I thought of monumental brass, as I thought of the globe of earth on which it was placed. But I have since found that Horace's boast, though too great for modesty and decorum, was by no means so vast as I had at first conceived. Where is Horace's tomb now? or where the tomb of Mæcenas his patron?

Solomon says, “One generation

passeth away, and another generation cometh : but the earth abideth for ever." The same that is here said of man, may hitherto, with the difference of a few years, at most of a few centuries, be said of the works of the hands of man.

We remarked some way back, that "the world was for ever in its infancy*." It is indeed so :

* The world is much like a school ; and to make the parallel complete, little more is necessary than to put one year in the latter, for ten years in the former. The pupils, we will suppose, are placed on an average

we cut ourselves off from the inheritance of our ancestors ; we for seven years ; some for a shorter, and a few for a longer term : and the director and guide of the institution sees one set of leathers succeed after another, who are no sooner tolerably accomplished, than they are dismissed from the scene : the studies that are entered on, and the instruction that is given, are perpetually beginning : and though much is acquired, and great and earnest efforts are made after improvement,—one decade, and one century of years, passes away and another comes, and every thing is nearly in the same posture ; while ever-young infatuation, inexperience, and temerity perpetually disturb the profoundest designs and maxims that can be framed for general advantage.

seem to conspire from time to time to cancel old scores, and begin the affairs of the human species afresh.

I had occasion a short time ago to examine the succession of a family. I cast about for the means by which this was to be done. The Parish-Registers of Births, Marriages, and Deaths occurred to me. These serve us with moderate fidelity as far back as king Henry the Eighth. We are then brought, as far as that point is concerned, to the cradle of the English nation.

Tomb-
stones
scarcely
outlast
thirty
years.

But I was idle enough to imagine that monumental inscriptions might afford some information. Alas ! ordinary tombstones are removed much after the manner, that the farmer removes the stubble of this year's crop that he may make room for the seed of the next. Go into any country church-yard. Three-fourths of the tombstones, you will find dated within the last twenty or thirty years. Yet as many persons died in the years that preceded ; and the passion for tombstones is probably now not greater than it was formerly. An

insulated tomb that aspires to permanence, must be ponderous. The best chance that a monument can have, is to be inclosed within a church, or to be fixed against its wall: it may then last three or four centuries.

A few years ago I was in Ireland. Story of the Seven Churches in Ireland. One of the memorable scenes which were visited by me on that occasion, was a spot interspersed with ruins, called the Seven Churches, in the county of Wicklow. It is a vale, inclosed on every side with rocks and hanging woods,

and seems entirely cut off from the rest of the world. At the further end (for it is accessible only in one point) is the smooth expanse of a lake, and by climbing along a narrow and irregular path which fringes the overhanging rock, you may arrive, at the hazard every moment of being precipitated into the water below, at St. Cavan's Bed, an excavation in the rock, with a couch, or seat, running the whole length of the cave, where the saint was accustomed to sleep, and which has the virtue, if resorted to by a pregnant woman on

the anniversary of the saint, of securing her a safe and easy delivery. The ruins at the nearer end of the valley, instead of seven, appear to have belonged to thirteen or fourteen independent buildings. As you enter the valley, they are on your left hand. When I was there, the unoccupied space on the right, was covered with a small camp. I conversed with the officers, and found that they had taken up most of the flat grave-stones with which the valley abounded, to make a pavement in the front of the principal tents. They complained that the

superstitious vulgar were offended with this proceeding of theirs as a sacrilege, and I own that my feelings were nearly in unison with those of the superstitious vulgar. I did not stay, nor had I sufficient practice in this species of decyphering, to make out the half-effaced inscriptions on these stones, which were doubtless of extraordinary antiquity.

of the Mo-
nastery of
Thetford.

Last spring I passed one day in solitude in the town of Thetford in Norfolk. The object which principally attracted my attention was

the ruins of the monastery there, which, though extremely imperfect, are picturesque. This monastery was founded and maintained at the expence of the ancient earls of Norfolk, and was used by them as the cemetery of their race. As I wandered through the limits of the inclosure, I trod upon the remains of the Bigods, the Mowbrays, and the Howards, men who in their day had exhibited vast magnificence, and upheld the pride of chivalry, who in their passions had shaken states, and in their untamed fierceness had bid defi-

ance to the resentment of kings. Ponderous monuments, graced with sculptures, and diversified with copious sepulchral inscriptions, once marked the place where they lay ; and marble, clamped with iron, and defended with balustrades, protected it from invasion. All now was speechless, and the grass grew as freely where their bones reposed, as over a peasant's grave. At the dissolution of the monasteries in the reign of Henry the Eighth, Thomas, third duke of Norfolk, petitioned the king, that the spot rendered sacred to his

thoughts by being the depository of all his buried ancestors, might not be laid open and defaced, but that if it was no longer consistent with the policy of England that it should be a receptacle for monks, he might be permitted to convert it into a school for the education of youth. Henry at first lent a favourable ear to his prayer, but upon farther advice he found that it would be a dangerous precedent, and that the abbey of Thetford must undergo the same fate with the rest of the monasteries.—This was signally a period, in which a

plot was laid to abolish the memory of the things that had been, and to begin the affairs of the human species afresh.

of Reading
Abbey. In the autumn of the same year accident led me to Reading in Berkshire, where I found that the same event had attended upon the remains of Henry the First, one of the sagest and most accomplished of the race of our kings, which had been deposited there; that I had a few months before contemplated in the abbey of Thetford.

The church of St. Paul's, as it was destroyed by fire in the year 1666, and is described by Dugdale, contained scarcely fewer monuments, or of less distinction, than Westminster Abbey. When it was re-edified, no thought occurred of marking the spot where the ashes of our ancestors reposed. The tombs seem to have been regarded as having answered the purposes of their erection, and were dismissed to oblivion.

This consideration leads my mind back to one other remark with respect to the monuments generally neglected.

gard to Westminster Abbey: a remark of almost universal application wherever tombs are to be found. They are fallen into entire neglect; no care is taken to maintain them in their original condition. When I paid a visit to the tomb of Alice Chaucer, duchess of Suffolk, at Ewelme in Oxfordshire, who died in the year 1475, I observed it repaired and beautified, newly gilded and painted in every part: I was told that two hundred pounds had been spent upon it the year before. A few such instances may be found;

where money has been bequeathed for the express purpose, or a fund has been set apart [for the poor at Ewelme], which may be diverted to this object at the discretion of the trustees. But in general it is signally otherwise. The tomb of our renowned conqueror, Edward the First, in Westminster Abbey, is merely a rude, vast pile of stone, with no inscription or record upon it, and which is only known by tradition to cover his ashes. The shrine of Edward the Confessor, erected at a vast expence by Henry the Third, is robbed and defaced

by every comer. How Henry the Fifth came by the loss of his head I do not pretend to explain. Every sort of indecorum has been practised in this venerable pile. The noses of a considerable part of the figures are broken off; and the last time I was there, I found a little pebble placed by some wanton boy on the tip of the nose of the recumbent figure of Catherine, wife of George Villiers first duke of Buckingham, which no one had thought it worth his while to remove.

In almost every ordinary church

yard we may see altar-monuments, with the upper surface and some of the sides broken to pieces, and the whole a heap of ruins, even before they are fifty years old.

This is a characteristic of the Remote ancestry thought of with indifference. human species. A person of decent character “honours his father and his mother;” but all beyond he regards with the most frigid indifference. We are more inclined to the miserable mummery of a funeral, the pageantry of a day, than to preserve the memory of our progenitors. A human creature of

the most admirable endowments, whose dispositions were the subject of universal encomium, whose gracious demeanour won all hearts, who spoke, and the ears of every one were delighted, who acted, and happiness every where followed and benedictions resounded, as soon as a generation is gone by, and the eyes that witnessed these virtues and graces are closed, is thought of no more, but as a simple link in the ostentatious chain of a pedigree. We look on with the idle gaze of the Levite in the parable; and the marble that

covers them is no longer any thing but a common stone. The person who detects himself in this apathy, should at least remember that his turn is hastening on, and that he will shortly be spurned, maltreated, and thought on with unshrinking indifference, even as he spurns those that went before him.

Virtue is virtue still, though a thousand years should have passed away since it was alive ; and there is something in the noblest impulses of the heart, that should -

enable them to flourish for ever in
perpetual youth.

Inexpen-
siveness of
the plan
here sug-
gested.

There is one obvious objection to the maintaining of monuments, in the expence it would occasion. I do not approve the laying out two hundred pounds on the tomb of Alice Chaucer ; and if such a proceeding were general, it would be an abuse of enormous magnitude. It is one object of the present proposal to show how the end may be effected at a very cheap rate. I do not require sumptuousness of decoration ; my plan calls

for no accumulation of materials, or exquisiteness of sculpture: the object is to mark the place where the great and the excellent of the earth repose, and to leave the rest to the mind of the spectator. It Its vitality. does not seek perpetuity, as ancient Egypt, in the massiness and immovableness of the pyramid; it aims at a better security, in keeping for ever alive the spirit that first put the project into action. *Opinionum commenta delet dies, Naturæ judicia confirmat,* says Cicero. If the plan is simple; if it appeals to the ever-living feelings of the

human heart ; if it be such, that though suggested late, we wonder that it was not among the first conceptions of civilised society ; then, once begun, it has a spirit of propagation in itself that forbids it to perish. But of this further hereafter.

Benefits
that will re-
sult from it. I proceed to consider the benefits that may be expected to arise from the adoption of this proposal.

Distinction
of New and
Old Coun-
tries.

There are two sorts of countries that divide the face of the globe, *New Countries* and *Old*. One of

the hemispheres of which it consists, is emphatically called the *New World*. A great part of the other hemisphere,—a considerable portion of Africa, a considerable portion of Asia, the most northerly portion of Europe,—consists of *New Countries*. I know not how long these may have been inhabited; but I know that the remoter generations of their inhabitants have passed away, without leaving a vestige behind.

Which of these two sorts of countries would a man of reflec-

tion, a man of taste, a man whose heart beats with moral perceptions and feelings, choose to visit? In *new countries* we may discern the wilder and more romantic features of nature; the precipice, the lake, the cataract, the hanging wood, and the vast ridges and clusters of mis-shapen and cloud-capt mountains. Glorious and admirable emotions grow out of the contemplation of these. We may stand upon the surface of a *new country*, and observe the heavens, and penetrate into all the recesses of astronomy. But how much greater

is it than this, to revert to the noblest of the creator's works, and to call up the nations and men who have formerly trod the earth which now I tread ! Perhaps every particle of mould which now exists, was once kneaded up into man, and thought and felt and spoke as I do now. This however is not the point. That which has perished and left not a trace behind, I may call barren soil, of no conscious utility to the men that be. But the clod (such it is now) that we know formerly to have been a part of the excellent of the earth,

is of the most admirable fertility. It bears, not perhaps flowers, and vegetable perfume, the corn of the granary, and the fruits of the orchard ; but it is fruitful of sentiments and virtues, of those thoughts which make man the brother of them “ that have none to help them,” and elevate him to a God.

*Advantage
of travel-
ling in an
old country.*

How delightful must it be, to wander among the scenes of ancient Greece and Romé ! Is it possible for a man who has contemplated the history of these

states, not to be lifted out of himself, when he stands on the soil where Sophocles thought, and Demosthenes spoke, and Themistocles and Aristides contended for the palm of public virtue? I could not traverse the area which was once the Roman forum, and not feel myself surrounded with the spirits of Fabri cius, and Regulus, and Gracchus, and Scipio, and Cicero, and Brutus. I would spend days in tracing out the villas of these Romans, and looking down from the Piræum, upon the gulph from which the Athenians

resorted to their wooden walls, and where they returned, when the storm of tyrannic invasion was over, to their beloved native land. All the particulars, of their devotion, their worship, their superstition, in some respects however weak, would be interesting to me.

I conceive it to be one of the advantages which the fortune of my birth reserved for me, that I was born the native of an *old country*.

Yet of these advantages man-

kind by their conduct seem to make no account. They do not husband their inheritance. Like Aristippus of Cyrene, they find their treasures too cumbersome for them, and pour them forth upon the sands of the desert.

Let us contemplate for a moment the subject under consideration in its connection with history. It is incredible in how idle and unimpassioned a temper we apply ourselves to the reading of history. Alexander the Great is to us the hero of a romance, and many a

Historical
utility of
antiquities
and ruins.

romance is read with an intenser winding up of the human feelings. The conduct of Edward the First in the conferences at Norham, and the behaviour of the Black Prince after the battle of Poitiers, are now merely tales, drawn up for our amusement. Man is a creature, who depends for his feelings upon the operations of sense. The barely looking upon a bust, supposed to be the portrait of the real Alexander, gives a different tone to his annals. When I have visited the monuments of our English kings, I study their transactions in a

graver spirit than before. Portraits may be imaginary; the scenes where great events have occurred are the scenes of those events no longer: but the dust that is covered by his tomb, is simply and literally *the great man himself.*

Maps of England have been drawn, where the scenes of famous battles and other memorable transactions have been pointed out by a particular mark. I love to dwell in a country, where, on whichever side I turn, I find some object connected with a heart-moving tale,

or some scene where the deepest interests of a nation for ages to succeed, have been strenuously agitated, and emphatically decided. A tale of invention, or of idle tradition merely, is of great power in Guy's cliff. this respect. When I saw the cliff where Guy earl of Warwick, having taken the vow of a hermit, was said, though within half a mile of his countess and his children, to have concealed himself till death, so that he was believed to be in the Holy Land ; when the spot was pointed out to me where the bower and labyrinth of Rosamond

Rosa-
mond's
Bower.

Clifford were represented to have stood ; it was impossible but that my soul should be somewhat moved.

“ Old Conway’s foaming flood,” Conway Castle. with the lofty castle beyond, has acquired a sacredness from the supposed massacre of the Bards in that place. If these scenes were not really transacted, and the passions of the real persons excited there, at least a beautiful association has been produced, by the bare selection of the spot made by the author of the romance, for the imaginary exercise of such feelings. But it is otherwise with the tale of

The Tower. truth. I never entered the Tower of London, without meditating on the murders with which it has been stained. The first time I stood in the Gallery of the British House of Commons, Hambden, and Pym, and Bradshaw, and Cromwel were present before me ; and I saw Charles the First ascend the Speaker's Chair, and demand the instant surrender of the leaders of his adversaries. The various fields in which “ York and Lancaster drew forth their battles,” bring to my mind the generous feelings and inextinguishable at-

House of Commons.

Battle scenes.

tachments which kept alive that contention, and the deplorable examples of cold-blooded murder with which it was attended. The scenes of the grand contest for our liberties under the Long Parliament, the fields where Falkland expired, and Hambden bled, hold a language of another sort.

I never understood the annals Kenilworth Castle. of chivalry so well, as when I walked among the ruins of Kenilworth Castle. I no longer trusted to the tale of the historian, the cold and uncertain record of words

formed upon paper, I beheld the queen, “ of lion-port,

Girt with many a baron bold,
And gorgeous dames,

uprear her starry front.” The subtle, the audacious and murder-dealing Leicester stood before me. I heard the trampling of horses, and the clangour of trumpets. The aspiring and lofty minded men of former times were seen by me as I passed along, and stood in review before me.—One fine evening in the beginning of autumn, I incidentally read Spenser’s beautiful Hymn to

Valle Cru-
cis Abbey.

Love under the ruins of Valle Crucis
Abbey in the county of Denbigh :
a volume of this author happened
to be in my pocket : and it is in-
credible how much sweetness the
sentiment gained, by contrast with
the sacred and austere chastity
once professed there, with the
monks who formerly dwelt within
those walls, and still who slept be-
neath my feet*. This it is to live
in an *old country*.

* Nothing can be more beautiful, than
the idea in the Grecian Mythology, of the
two kinds of fire, and the divinities that pre-
sided over each. Vulcan was the God of

Applica-
tion.

What I plead for in the present proposal, is that by a simple and gross and material fire, the fire employed for vulgar and mechanical purposes ; he was the husband of the parent and prolific Venus. But Vesta, the emblem of chastity, was also the Goddess of fire. The fire of Vulcan was the fire of the forge and of thunder ; it was fitful and furious : but the fire of Vesta was the purer element, which burned evenly, and was never extinguished. By this emblem it is signified to us in the most expressive manner, that chastity, a heaven-born resolution, and the sublime pursuit of a determined purpose, is not, “as dull fools suppose,” a frigid and languid state of thought, but has in it a fervour and enthusiasm, a heat unallied to fumes and obscurity, more

perhaps infallible means, we should paralyse the hand of Oblivion.

admirable and divine than any other of which an intellectual being is susceptible.

Meantime, the moral of this fable is of still wider application. There is, and perhaps always has been, much cant afloat in the world, about *warm hearts*, and *cold hearts*: and no doubt there is a real division of human beings into what may be loosely called the *feeling* and the *unfeeling*. But the division is not exactly as it is vulgarly understood. The hottest fire is not that which on every slight incentive blazes on the surface, but that which is close pent up in the recesses of the heart, and much oftener causes the bosom to glow, than the eye to send

Why should Milton, and Shakespear, and lord Bacon, and sir Philip Sidney die? Perhaps yet forth sparkles of fire. In a word, the sincerest warmth is not wild, but calm; and operates in greater activity in the breast of the stoic, than in that of the vulgar enthusiast. If the image of permanent and celestial fire can be justly applied to any thing human, it best accords with the fervour of genius; and Shakespear, who possessed that quality in the greatest abundance of any earthly creature, was noted by his contemporaries for a man of equable carriage, and the most admirable serenity of temper. I do not believe that any man ever painted the passions well, without understanding them, or understood them, without a susceptible heart.

they shall not wholly die. I am not contented to visit the house in Bread-Street where Milton was born, or that in Bunhill-Row where he died, I want to repair to the place where *he now dwells*. Some spirit shall escape from his ashes, and whisper to me things unselt before. I am not satisfied to converse only with the generation of men that now happens to subsist ; I wish to live in intercourse with the Illustrious Dead of All Ages. I demand the friendship of Zoroaster. Orpheus, and Linus, and Musæus shall be welcome to me.

I have a craving and an earnest heart, that can never be contented with any thing in this sort, while something more remains to be obtained. And I feel that thus much at least the human race owes to its benefactors, that they should never be passed by without an affectionate remembrance. I would say, with Ezekiel, the Hebrew, in his Vision, “ Let these dry bones live ! ” Not let them live merely in cold generalities and idle homilies of morality ; but let them live, as my friends, my philosophers, my instructors, and my guides !

I would say with the moralist of old, “ Let me act, as I would wish to have acted, if Socrates or Cato were the spectators of what I did !” And I am not satisfied only to call them up by a strong effort of the imagination, but I would have them, and men like them, “ around my path, and around my bed,” and not allow myself to hold a more frequent intercourse with the living, than with the good departed.

The world we dwell in is a curious object. It is an ever-shifting scene, and by some moralists has been

Odiousness
of living
only with
the men
that live—
sterility.

compared to a *camera obscura*, that affords us the prospect of a frequented road. I have myself lived long enough to have seen almost all those persons whom my childhood and my nonage reverenced, consigned to the grave: those whom I remember with go-carts and rattles now occupy the scene: and even they are fast passing over, to make room for their successors. Within the same limits were circumscribed the lives of Solon and Alfred. They existed on earth for a little while, and—"the eyes that had seen them, saw them no more."

The men that have lived, are they less important than the men of the present day ? Had their thoughts less of sinew and substance; were their passions less earnest, their conceptions less vigorous, their speech less fervent, or their deeds less lofty and less real, than ours ? He must be a man of feeble conceit and a narrow soul, to whom they are like the shadows of a magic lantern. Shadows certainly they are, no more than we are shadows. To him who is of a mind rightly framed, the world is a thousand times more populous, than to the

man, to whom every thing that is not flesh and blood, is nothing. I pity the being of slender comprehension, who lives only with George the Third, and Alexander of Russia, and Wieland, and Schiller, and Kant, and Jeremy Bentham, and John Horne Tooke, when if the grosser film were removed from his eyes, he might live and sensibly mingle with Socrates, and Plato, and the Decii, and the Catos, with Chaucer, and Milton, and Thomas Aquinas, and Thomas à Becket, and all the stars that gild our mortal sphere. They are not dead.

They are still with us in their stories, in their words, in their writings, in the consequences that do not cease to flow fresh from what they did: they still have their place, where we may visit them, and where, if we dwell in a composed and a quiet spirit, we shall not fail to be conscious of their presence.

For the purposes here treated of it would be necessary that some pains should be taken to investigate the precise spot where the bones of men have been deposited. It fortunately happens that a spirit

of the men
of former
times to be
discovered.

of antiquarian research is one of the characteristics of the present age, and that therefore, if the proposal here made were adopted, the vanity of this spirit, where a better motive was wanting, would assist in the execution. I would never have the mind of man deceived in this point, where it was possible to avoid it. Feeling and scepticism in the same question “cannot live together.” When I meet the name of a great man inscribed in a cemetery, I would have my whole soul awakened to honour his memory, and chastised into sobriety by the

thought of what he was ; and while I call his ghost from the tomb to commune with me, and to satisfy the ardour of my love, I must not be intruded on by any idle question, that this is perhaps but his ideal grave. Yet to an imaginary person I do not refuse the semblance of a tomb. As has been already observed, poetical scenes affect us in somewhat the same manner as historical : I should be delighted to visit the spot where Cervantes imagined Don Quixote to be buried, or the fabulous tomb of Clarissa Harlowe. I would not

therefore refuse in the case of real personages, after all reasonable enquiries had been pursued, to take up with the traditional sepulchre of king Arthur.

Project to
be begun
in Great
Britain.

In every thing there must be a beginning. All therefore that I am here suggesting, and all that could at first be attempted, is a scheme for Great Britain. Good deeds and good feelings are contagious. That might be expected to happen here, which Pope describes in the progress of moral sentiment in general: if but a

“pebble stirs the peaceful lake,” strait one circle begins to be formed, and then another, till the agitation at length reaches to the remotest parts, and the most distant extremity.

The scheme here suggested of a simple memorial of wood, will of course be perceived to be only suited to graves which are in the open air, and perhaps we must add in a rural position. It is easy however to modify this proposal to the variety of circumstances which may occur. I would not recom-
Modifica-
tions to
which it
must be
subjected.

mend to demolish the ample and sumptuous monuments, particularly which belong to persons of genuine merit, that now exist. But, wherever new expence is to be incurred, I would plead for simplicity, a simplicity that should lead us by a strait road to the great man himself, without diverting our thoughts to the skill of the sculptor, or the vain-glory and ostentation of the great man's descendants. A horizontal stone on the level of the pavement, or a mural tablet, where the grave is inclosed within a building, is abundantly

enough. Meanwhile, I am impelled by my project to look forward to the time, when Westminster Abbey, and St. Paul's at London, and St. Peter's at Rome, shall be prostrated on the earth, and nothing but two yards of perpendicular soil shall be interposed, between the great man, and the skies to which his inherent temper unavoidably prompted him to aspire.

One or two further considerations are yet necessary, before I can consider my idea as adequately developed.

Objection
from the
instability
of sublu-
narythings.

It may be objected, that such a proposal is essentially nugatory, since all human things are subject to change. “ If monumental brass is found ineffectual, if towers and palaces and temples vanish away, if of some of the greatest cities which man ever inhabited no vestige now remains, what virtue can there be in a white cross of wood and a wooden slab, that we should flatter ourselves that they will be of longer life? Incorporations and charters have their date, and there is not one now in existence that has lasted a thousand years.”

To this I answer, first, that, if we adopt the proposal, *we* at least shall reap the benefit, and experience the moral uses, which are of no common magnitude, that attend upon such an institution.

Secondly, we shall feel the substantial consolation, that we have discharged our part, and performed our duty. The affairs of mankind are supposed to be subject to “a sort of periodical influx of barbarians; and new Goths and Vandals will hereafter arise, who will sweep all memorial of our improvements

from the face of the earth." Be it so: I know that we cannot "command success:" all that is left us is; we may act so as to "deserve it."

But I have better hopes.

Substan-
tially an-
swered.

The plan here offered is exceedingly simple and unexpensive. I trust to the heart of man, and not to the hands of man, for its execution. If it is perfectly in accord with the universal feelings of our nature, it may be difficult to begin: once begun, and proceeded

on for a certain length of time, it may prove impossible to abrogate.

It has been already observed, that though men love and honour their parents, they look with cold indifference on their remoter ancestors. But there is a gradation in this. Though we look with indifference on the men of an hundred years ago, it is not so when they are placed in a more distant perspective. “Antiquity,” as Montaigne says, “is an object of a peculiar sort; distance magnifies it.” With what veneration do men now

Gradually increasing reverence for what is old.

look, upon what is conjectured to be the tomb of Virgil ? This would be the case in a still higher degree, if it related to the more distant benefactors and ornaments of the world. There is one difficulty respecting this, as the matter stands at present : it might be expensive to keep up the tomb of Virgil, or Cicero, or Demosthenes, or Homer ; and chance only, and that an extraordinary chance, would find the man who should say, *This expense belongs to me.* But the plan here suggested remedies this defect in two ways : it is attended with

very little expence ; and its direct view is to keep up and perpetuate a committee of men, who should feel, *This is our business.*

It is then one great advantage of the present scheme, that the longer it lasts, the more vigorous it is qualified to become. The great men who died a century ago may be only moderately precious to *us* ; they will become (if they were of sterling greatness) more an object of enthusiastic admiration to our posterity. Ages to come will also be rapt in wonder at the simplicity

of the means by which they are still enabled to find where the excellent of the earth repose ; and it may not unreasonably be supposed that while pyramids, and aqueducts, roads of the most substantial structure, and vast cities, shall perish, these simple land-marks, which any child might overthrow, shall be regarded as sacred, and remain undisturbed witnesses of the most extraordinary revolutions.

Danger of
monuments
becoming
too numer-
ous consi-
dered.

Nor is there any danger that these memorials should become so numerous, as to interfere with the

free use and fertility of the soil. Every parent or relative ought no doubt to be at liberty to mark as he pleases, and in what form he pleases, the earth which covers the ashes once so loved. But this would be a sort of altar, the duration of which would scarcely exceed the life of him who worshipped at it.

It is with the memories of men, as it is with books. Those will always be the most numerous, which are of the freshest date. But this is all accident. The books

and the memories of men of the eighteenth century, at present overrun our libraries, and clog up our faculties. But the time is hastening on, when this shall no longer be the case, when they shall be reduced to their true standard, and brought down to their genuine numbers. The tomb, the view of which awakens no sentiment, and that has no history annexed to it, must perish, and ought to perish. The description of the fate of mortal writings, so admirably given by Swift in his *Dedication to Posternity*, is not less applicable to the

present subject. We may turn away our heads, and the memorial perishes; we may revisit the cemetery after the lapse of a few months, and one stone or another, with its inscription, shall have disappeared, and been replaced by one of fresher gloss and more unseasoned pretensions. I foresee no present danger, that those dead “of whom the world was not worthy,” should crowd and elbow out the conveniences of the living: I am rather desirous that the catalogue of those who merit this species of remembrance, should be made on the most

liberal scale. Memorials of this kind can be nothing more than commentaries and illustrations of history; and history is necessarily limited, by the limited faculties of the human mind to take in and store up facts, and masses of facts.

Subjects of . . . I may be asked, "Who is to monumen- draw up the table of the Illustrious tal honours, how to be selected. Dead, and to mark the line of separation between the worthy and the unworthy? How gross are the mistakes that have been committed on this subject? . . . What wretched pretenders have some-

times been honoured and idolised by their survivors? While on the other hand, the names of men who have been made little account of by their contemporaries, have not unfrequently been drawn by a more just-judging posterity, from the obscurity in which they were perishing."

The answer to this is easy. Let the rule of allowance, to the pretensions of the dead, and the partialities of the living, be a liberal rule. He must be a churl indeed, who would refuse two feet of earth

to even a doubtful fame. If then our scroll be ample, there will be room enough in it for the caprices and changes, which are incident to fame, scarcely less than to fortune. The maxim already delivered, is for the most part the cardinal maxim, “That tomb, the view of which can awaken some sentiment, and that has some history annexed to it, is worthy to be preserved.”

The object of the suggested institution is twofold; to rescue from impending oblivion the graves of those, whose monuments, from

the time that has elapsed since their deaths, are either decayed, or utterly subverted ; and to mark the places where men of humble merit, recently deceased, and whose closing days were the victims of poverty, repose. In all this there is scanty room for party and cabal. The poor man who sunk to his grave neglected, a Chatterton, a Boyse, or a Savage, will have no advocates but what are such from conviction* ; and concerning the

* Chatterton and Boyse were I believe, both of them, interred at the expence of the parish, in the Burying Ground of the Work-

excellent of past ages, party and contention are nearly extinct. The house in Shoe-Lane. The man whose heart has ached over the narrative of the lives of these men, will feel a double pang, when he finds them alike failing of the prize to which they aspired, living and dead. Chatterton died too young to enable us to judge of his propensities; and if the painful conviction is forced upon us in the case of the other two, that their dispositions were so disorderly as to make it difficult, almost impossible, to serve them, let it be remembered that they offend no man now, that their irregularities cannot now disturb any man's peace, let us weep over their follies, draw instruction from their examples, and meditate with sadness upon that species of

precept therefore I would wish to lay down upon the subject should be this: Do not fear to remember too much; only be upon your guard not to forget any thing that is worthy to be remembered.

It may occur to some persons that the project here suggested, would be attended with considerable expence in point of superinten-

No ex-
pence for
superinten-
dence re-
quired.

genius and intellectual power (rare I hope in its occurrence) which can be associated with incorrigible weakness, and bear within it the taint of utter inutility to its possessor and his connections.

dence. “ Almost every village,” it may be said, “ contains the grave of some great man : the remains of departed merit are widely dispersed : might it not require an army, as numerous as that of excisemen, to watch over and preserve the “ frail memorials” which were erected to their honour ?”

This, if true, would indeed be a fatal objection ; but I cannot see the subject in this light. A very small proportion of time would be consumed in this vigilance ; if the memorial were wantonly re-

moved or destroyed, the recollection of where a great or a good man was buried would not perish in a year, and an annual visitation would be abundantly sufficient for the object proposed. It could not therefore be a question of great difficulty, to prevail on proper persons to perform this labour gratuitously. The subscribers, if the plan of a sufficient subscription were carried, would themselves be considerably scattered; and the incumbent, or even the curate, of a parish, is usually imbued with such a tincture of literature, and of the

knowledge of things past, as not to be averse to the undertaking for so moderate a portion of attendance as is here required.

Literary
merit not
generally
felt.

I know not whether it is worth while to notice under this head the idea, “ that the vulgar mind does not easily apprehend how literary men are its benefactors : military and naval characters they best understand ; for the benefit or glory attendant on their achievements is most tangible.”

Answer.

To this I have nothing to op-

pose but the fact ; and I do not believe that human nature is so perversely constituted, as not in process of time to allow to facts their due weight. Military and naval achievements are of temporary operation : the victories of Cimon and Scipio are passed away ; these great heroes have dwindled into a name ; but whole Plato, and Xenophon, and Virgil have descended to us, undefaced, undismembered, and complete. I can dwell upon them for days and for weeks : I am acquainted with their peculiarities ; their inmost

thoughts are familiar to me ; they appear before me with all the attributes of individuality ; I can ruminate upon their lessons and sentiments at leisure, till my whole soul is lighted up with the spirit of these authors. “ The poorest peasant in the remotest corner of England, is probably a different man, from what he would have been but for the writings of Shakespeare and Milton. Every man who is powerfully and deeply impressed by the perusal of their works, communicates a portion of the inspiration all around him. It passes

from man to man, till it influences the whole mass. I cannot tell that the wisest mandarin now living in China, is not indebted for part of his energy and sagacity to Shakespeare and Milton, even though it should happen that he never heard of their names."

One observation more. If it should be thought that such a A Sepulchral Atlas proposed. scheme as is here suggested, would, from the mere fluctuation and uncertainty of human affairs, be too precarious in its operation, one further security might be employed. I spoke a while ago

of maps, in which the scenes of famous battles were distinguished with a peculiar mark. Why might not something of this kind be introduced in the subject before us?... It might be called, the *Atlas of those who Have Lived, for the Use of Men Hereafter to be Born.* It might be plentifully marked with meridian lines and circles of latitude, “with centric and eccentric scribbled o'er,” so as to ascertain with incredible minuteness where the monuments of eminent men had been, and where their ashes continue to repose. If this were done, nothing more

would be necessary in times of the greatest calamity and devastation, than to preserve one copy of this precious depository of the records of past ages. Though cities were demolished, and empires overthrown, though the ploughshare were passed over the site of populous streets, and the soil they once occupied were “sown with salt,” the materials would thus be preserved, by means of which, at the greatest distance of time, every thing that was most sacred might be restored, and the calamity which had swallowed up whole genera-

tions of men, might be obliterated as if it had never been.

and a Cata-
logue of
Sepulchres.

I would further recommend that a Catalogue should be compiled, exhibiting in a brief compass the places of sepulture of the Illustrious Departed. If, as has been here asserted, the cemeteries of the dead form the best commentary on historical narration, such a catalogue would be of exemplary use. When I enter the chapel of Edward the Confessor, and behold Henry the Fifth on the West, Edward the Third and Richard the Second to the North, and Henry the Third, and

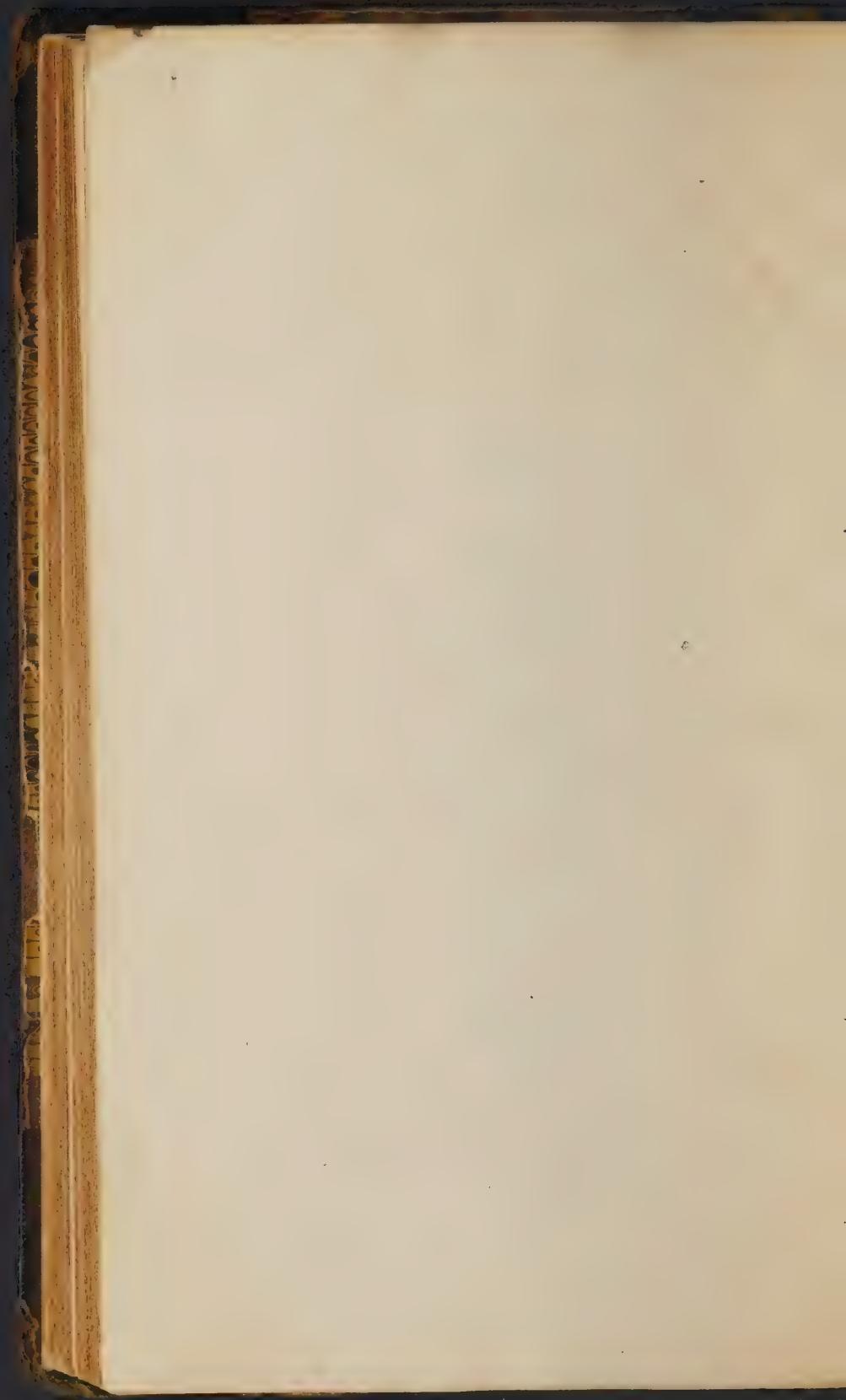
his son, king Edward the First, to the South, this is a sort of pledge to me of the verity of their histories. When I read the list of our kings who have been buried at Winchester, I have visited that city, though I never saw their tombs, and even this serves me as a new link of association. Just so, in the life of every man whose writings or deeds have ever interested me, I regard the place of his burial as one part of his biography, without which all other records and remains are left in a maimed and imperfect state. A Catalogue therefore, which should in a small number of pages present

us with the last and still remaining abode of all that English honour has yet had to boast, might be despicable to the literal man and the calculator; but would be a precious relic to the man of sentiment, and prove to be a Traveller's Guide, of a very different measure of utility, from the "Catalogue of Gentlemen's Seats," which is now appended to the "Book of Post-Roads through Every Part of Great Britain."

THE END.

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